

RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS  
OF  
THE WORLD

"A new Catholicity has dawned upon the world: All religions are now recognized as essentially Divine. They represent the different angles at which man looks at God. Questions of origin, polemics as to evidences, erudite dissertations concerning formulae, are disappearing, because religions are no longer judged by their supposed accordance with the letter of the Bible, but by their ability to minister to the wants and fulfil the aspirations of men. The individual, what can it make of him? As it raises or debases, purifies or corrupts, fills with happiness or torments with fear, so it is judged to accord with the Divine will. The credentials of the Divine origin of every religion are to be found in the hearts and lives of those who believe it. The old intolerance has disappeared, and the old indifference, which succeeded it, has well-nigh disappeared also. The new tolerance of faith recognizes as Divine all the creeds which have enabled men to overcome their bestial appetites with visions of things spiritual and eternal"—UNIVERSAL REVIEW, December, 1888.



# RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS OF THE WORLD

National, Christian, and Philosophic

A ~~CONSIDERATION~~  
ADDRESSES DELIVERED AT SOUTH PLACE INSTITUTE  
IN 1888, 89

REVISED, AND IN SOME CASES ~~RE~~WRITTEN BY THE AUTHORS



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## PREFACE.

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*"In proportion as we love truth more and victory less, we shall become anxious to know what it is which leads our opponents to think as they do. We shall begin to suspect that the pertinacity of belief exhibited by them must result from a perception of something we have not perceived. And we shall aim to supplement the portion of truth we have found with the portion found by them."*—  
HERBERT SPENCER, *First Principles*, part of § 3.

THIS volume is published in response to requests from numerous friends who desired to have, in a permanent form, the Lectures delivered on Sunday Afternoons at South Place Institute, during 1888-89, on "Centres of Spiritual Activity" and "Phases of Religious Development."

These Lectures were first designed to explain and illustrate the different Religious Movements of the day, for though most thinking persons are fully persuaded of their own belief they are often unable to understand the standpoint of others equally earnest, and thus fail to do justice to men of different creeds. After the current divisions of Christianity and Modern Ethical Philosophies had been treated, it was thought that Ancient Religious Systems might also be profitably studied in the same manner, especially as the general public have very little opportunity of becoming acquainted with them, and not unfrequently mistake their mere accidents, or outward observances, for their spirit and substance.

It has not been possible, unfortunately, to reproduce the whole of the Lectures, some having been given *extempore*, and the publication having only been decided upon towards the close of the series.

Some of the lecturers have been so kind as to re-write their

Lectures expressly for this volume, whilst, in the case of one or two, recourse has been had to *The Inquirer* report, for the substance of the Lecture. The article on "The Quaker Reformation" has been specially written for this publication; and thanks are due to Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton for permission to use Canon Rawlinson's Lecture.

Mr. B. F. C. Costelloe wishes it to be understood that he had not the opportunity of revising the final proof sheets of "The Mass;" and that in consequence certain errors have crept in. A note of these will be found in the Appendix, p. 561.

The willingness with which the various lecturers came forward, without fee or reward, to speak on his or her special topic, to audiences not always sympathetic; and in some cases at the risk, almost certainty, of offending their own co-religionists; and the sympathy expressed by several eminent men, who from various causes were unable to take a personal part in the course, have been very encouraging to those who made the arrangements.

It is hoped that the larger reading public to whom this volume is now offered will appreciate as highly as the audiences to whom the Lectures were originally addressed the catholic spirit which devised the scheme, and the ability with which it was carried out.

WILLIAM SHEOWRING,	}	<i>Hon. Secs. Institute Committee.</i>
CONRAD W. THIES,		

SOUTH PLACE INSTITUTE.

# CONTENTS.

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THE COMMON GROUND OF THE RELIGIOUS SENTIMENT . . . . .	} <i>Edward Clodd</i> . . . . .	1
THE RELIGION OF THE ASSYRIANS . . . . .	<i>George Rawlinson</i> . . . . .	9
THE RELIGION OF BABYLONIA . . . . .	<i>W. St. Chad. Boscawen</i> . . . . .	27
CONFUCIUS THE SAGE AND THE RELIGION OF CHINA . . . . .	} <i>James Legge</i> . . . . .	40
TAOISM . . . . .	<i>F. H. Balfour</i> . . . . .	53
THE ORIGIN OF THE SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY DEVELOPED IN BUDDHISM AS IT EXISTS IN CHINA. . . . .	} <i>Samuel Beal</i> . . . . .	73
SHINTÔISM . . . . .	<i>Isabella Bird (Mrs. Bishop)</i> . . . . .	89
THE RELIGIONS OF JAPAN . . . . .	<i>C. Pfoundes</i> . . . . .	101
HINDUISM . . . . .	<i>Sir Alfred C. Lyall</i> . . . . .	108
OLD INDIAN POETRY AND RELIGIOUS THOUGHT. . . . .	} <i>Mrs. Frederika Macdonald</i> . . . . .	112
BUDDHA AND BUDDHISM . . . . .	<i>Mrs. Frederika Macdonald</i> . . . . .	130
BUDDHISM IN CHRISTIANITY . . . . .	<i>Arthur Lillie</i> . . . . .	147
THE PARSİ RELIGION . . . . .	<i>Dadabhai Naoroji</i> . . . . .	172
SIKHISM . . . . .	<i>Frederic Pincott</i> . . . . .	184
JEWISH ETHICS . . . . .	<i>Morris Joseph</i> . . . . .	197
THE JEWS IN MODERN TIMES . . . . .	<i>D. W. Marks</i> . . . . .	213
MITHRAISM . . . . .	<i>John M. Robertson</i> . . . . .	225
MUHAMMADANISM . . . . .	<i>G. W. Leitner</i> . . . . .	249
TEUTONIC HEATHENDOM . . . . .	<i>F. York Powell</i> . . . . .	283
THE MYTHS OF CHRISTMASTIDE . . . . .	<i>R. Bithell</i> . . . . .	294
THE CHURCH CATHOLIC . . . . .	<i>B. F. C. Costelloe</i> . . . . .	307
THE MASS . . . . .	<i>B. F. C. Costelloe</i> . . . . .	329
THE NEW CHURCH, CALLED SWEDENBORGIAN	<i>Thomas Child</i> . . . . .	350
THE RELIGION OF DANTE . . . . .	<i>Oscar Browning</i> . . . . .	355

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND . . . . .	<i>George H. Curteis</i>	. . . . .	372
THE UNITARIANS . . . . .	<i>Henry W. Crosskey</i>	. . . . .	376
NONCONFORMITY . . . . .	<i>J. Allanson Picton</i>	. . . . .	396
METHODISM . . . . .	<i>Mrs. Sheldon Amos</i>	. . . . .	409
INDEPENDENCY, OR LOCAL CHURCH GOVERN- MENT . . . . .	} <i>Edward White</i>	. . . . .	419
THE PLACE OF BAPTISTS IN THE EVOLUTION OF BRITISH CHRISTIANITY . . . . .			
THE QUAKER REFORMATION . . . . .	<i>William Pollard</i>	. . . . .	444
THOMAS CHALMERS . . . . .	<i>David Fotheringham</i>	. . . . .	455
THEISM . . . . .	<i>Charles Voysey</i>	. . . . .	473
SPINOZA . . . . .	<i>Sir Frederick Pollock</i>	. . . . .	485
HUMANITY . . . . .	<i>Frederic Harrison</i>	. . . . .	502
MYSTICISM . . . . .	<i>W. S. Lilly</i>	. . . . .	506
ESOTERIC BUDDHISM . . . . .	<i>A. P. Sinnett</i>	. . . . .	516
THE GOSPEL OF SECULARISM . . . . .	<i>G. W. Foote</i>	. . . . .	525
THE ETHICAL MOVEMENT DEFINED . . . . .	<i>Stanton Coit</i>	. . . . .	531
A NATIONAL CHURCH . . . . .	<i>Arthur W. Hutton</i>	. . . . .	545
APPENDIX . . . . .		. . . . .	568

# NATIONAL RELIGIONS.

# RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS OF THE WORLD.

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## THE COMMON GROUND OF THE RELIGIOUS SENTIMENT.

BY EDWARD CLODD.<sup>1</sup>

A GLANCE at the syllabus of lectures to which the present is designed as introductory, still more at the schedule of sects in *Whitaker's Almanack*, numbering about two hundred and forty—all of whom, the Jews excepted, from "Adventists" to "Wiggan's Evangelistic Mission," profess and call themselves Christians—may remind us of Voltaire's famous taunt that there are thirty religions in England, but only one sauce.

Closer analysis, however, will show that these sects have certain essential elements in common, into which, "for we have this treasure in earthen vessels," other elements have intruded, defiling their purity and obscuring their nature, but giving to each sect its *raison d'être*. Thus it is that the various theological parties have been so anxious to justify their existence, with lamentable waste of effort, in striving to prove one another in the wrong, that the larger question of "things commonly believed among" them has been too often ignored. If the world, especially that vast area of it which is printed in black on the missionary maps, is in such parlous state as the preachers tell us, they might well sink their differences and join their forces against the common enemy of souls.

In looking down the list of lectures<sup>2</sup> thus far announced, we may take credit for sufficient acquaintance with the doctrines and

<sup>1</sup> As the notes of this lecture were not kept, the substance of it has been written from memory with the help of a brief report which appeared in the "Daily Chronicle," January 2nd, 1888.

<sup>2</sup> This list was afterwards much extended to include lectures on past and present non-Christian religions, and on certain systems of philosophy.



polity of each religious body to assume what the several exponents have to say, and therefore to dis sever fundamentals from accidentals. And it may be no profitless task to seek amidst overlying material for some common principle, to ask whether Newton Hall is or is not entitled to be included, with the Brompton Oratory and Mr. Spurgeon's Tabernacle, in the list of "Centres of Spiritual Activity;" and whether Mr. Frederic Harrison, who, under less favourable circumstances for the healthy discipline of his emotions, might have been a Methodist local preacher or even a captain in the Salvation Army, is not entitled to be classed with Mr. Lilly and Mr. Spurgeon as a spiritually-minded man.

It is clear that that title cannot be granted in common on the ground of the submission of such men to the same authority. The majority of the lecturers will appeal to the Bible. Now, apart from the difficulty that the miscellaneous writings which make up that book are of uncertain authorship and date, and, as the many sects evidence, of disputed and unsettled meaning, the modern Berean is troubled by this further difficulty, that the essence of Revelation lies in its making known what man otherwise could not have known, and that it tells it in language so clear—a kind of Volapük which all of any age and any race may read—that there cannot be two opinions about its meaning. That Bible, Koran, Vedas, Tripitaka, Adi-Granth, or any other sacred literatures fulfil these conditions may be contended by their several official expounders, and may win the assent of the indolently credulous, but to men of sane and lucid soul the assumption is really astounding. And the pity of it is that the genuine and abiding value of these venerable books is obscured by the fictitious value imparted to them, because their priceless worth is in the experience of "men of like passions with ourselves" which they embody, and in the light which they throw on the high-water mark of knowledge reached by the ages in which they were written. *They* are the materialists who thus make these records of man's speculations and strivings "of none effect," under whose hermeneutic scalpel the spirit escapes, and the letter, dead and useless, remains. The Church of Rome offers refuge from the dilemma created by the varying deliverances of the sects by constituting herself the interpreter of Revelation. *Vox Ecclesiæ vox Dei*, and be her major premiss granted the further course of the believer is untroubled. But as her claim rests on the interpretations which she gives to certain passages of Scripture, and on one or two marvellous assumptions behind them, it has no weight with those who reject Revelation. For those who accept it the fact should not be blinked that there is no logical standpoint short of entering her communion. But even the rigidity of which she makes

boast, as the vicegerent of Him "with whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning," is a fiction. Like the lesser organizations—all of them direct or indirect seceders from her—she has maintained her hold from time to time by politic concessions, and by ingenious adaptations to new conditions brought about through advance in knowledge. Until our own time no positions of fresh importance have had to be yielded. The abandonment of the statements of Scripture as to the earth's supreme position in the universe, and as to its rapid creation in time, at the demand of astronomy and geology, did not involve the surrender of any fundamental dogma. The Church did not thereby, to quote part of the witty epitaph on Lord Westbury's famous judgment, "deprive the orthodox believer of his sure and certain hope of eternal damnation."

But the demands of palæontology and anthropology are more serious. They have not brought peace, but a sword. No ingenuity of reconcilers, fertile as this has shown itself in resource, can harmonize the statement in Genesis, emphasized in the Pauline Epistles, that pain and death came into the world as the punishment of Adam's transgression, with the evidence which the rocks supply as to the existence of strife and death ages before man appeared. No such ingenuity can harmonize the statements in Genesis, as to man's pristine purity and relatively advanced condition, with the teeming evidence furnished by every part of the earth as to his primitive state being one of savagery, from which favourable conditions have enabled a minority to emerge. With this refutation of the theory of the fall of man, the scheme of his Redemption through Jesus Christ, which is the fundamental part of Christian Theology, vanishes into thin air.

"The cusses an' the promesers make one gret chain, an' ef  
You snake one link out here, one there, how much on't 'ud be lef'?"

It is this which the Churches have to face; which none of them have yet faced with frankness. Did dogmas and outworn beliefs die because evidence and argument have done their best, this would have died forty years ago, when M. Boucher de Perthes unearthed his flint implements in the Somme valley. But beliefs do not perish thus. They perish under the slow and silent operation of changes to which they fail to adapt themselves. The atmosphere is altered, the organism cannot respond, and therefore it dies. Thus has perished belief in witchcraft, thus is slowly perishing belief in miracles, and, with this, belief in the supernatural generally, as commonly and coarsely defined.

All these changes the age notes with sympathetic eye. For it is not a flippant, but an earnest, age. It has no sympathy with

criticism that is destructive only, or with ridicule or ribaldry as modes of attack on current beliefs. It knows that they have a necessary place in the evolution of ideas, that they are capable of explanation, and traceable from birth to full development by the scientific method which is applied to every historical inquiry. Hence we have the modern science of comparative theology, with its Hibbert Lectures, Gifford Lectures, which are critical, as opposed to Bampton Lectures and Hulse Lectures, which are apologetic. It sees that just as man in a savage or barbarous state made use of like materials for the supply of his bodily needs, so his mental processes are identical, his explanations of phenomena very much the same at corresponding levels of culture. Hence it is that as we find traces of a Stone Age all the world over, so we find traces of fetichism underlying animism, all the world over.

Thus much has been said in endeavour to show that the Bible and other sacred books do not afford the common ground of which we are in search.

Does Theology? defining this as including man's notions about god or gods, and his relations with them, amongst every race, and throughout all time, since man had faculty of thought upon such matters. To trace the history of the evolution of ideas of spiritual beings is to trace the history of man's intellectual development. Primitive theology is primitive science; it is the outcome of man's first efforts to explain the nature of his surroundings, and of the divers influences which affect him for good, and, still more, for ill, as the malignant character of deities amongst lower races shows. His gods have been, still largely are, projections of himself; he details their shape and size, their parts and passions, their daily life, advancing in his conception or presentment of them from crude animism to the higher spiritualism as his own ideas have become loftier and purer. But, hide them as we may, the differences between the gods of the lower and the higher culture from the polytheistic stage to the so-called monotheistic stage are differences of degree and not of kind, the common element in them being the ascription of personality with resulting human qualities. The reproach of old may be addressed to Theist and Tri-theist to-day: "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself." And with truth says Epicurus: "The impious man is not he who denies the existence of gods like those commonly worshipped; the impious man is he who asserts the gods to be such as the vulgar conceive them."

Well, the more a man considers these things and sees that neither sacred books nor theories of deity afford common ground of agreement, while at the same time he notes what abounding

zeal and earnestness the various religious denominations manifest, the more anxious is he to find some basis of unity between those whose aim is the same—to make men good and unselfish, noble and gentle.

In *what*, then, does the religious sentiment consist? Many definitions of Religion have been attempted, with as little success as attempted definitions of Life. Well that this is so, for that which is capable of analysis has the seeds of dissolution within. Still, some general meaning may be attached to a term which designates what must remain fluent and uncrystallized. Matthew Arnold, in his revolt against anthropomorphism, disentangled religion from all dogma, and defined it as "morality touched by emotion." This is good as far as it goes, and it will be hard to find a better definition, if under the word "emotion" we include that feeling of mystery and reverence which is awakened by perception of our limitations; and the conception of an ideal highest and best, the striving after which quickens man's sense of duty and moves him to action.

Let us then see whether it be feasible or not to find ultimate ground of unity *in reverence deepened, and right conduct made possible, by knowledge.*

Science does not empty the universe of mystery, but only of the pseudo-mysteries which are the product of ages when any conception of orderly relation was impossible. Its main concern is to interpret the facts which man gathers from observation and experience, and to abstain from assertion or denial respecting anything beyond its ken. Since it can throw no light on the genesis of matter or motion; on the beginnings of life, which to it is not one whit less mysterious than the beginnings of the crystal, the ultimate causes which quicken the corpuscles into pulsation being as unknown as those which lock the dead atoms in angular embrace; or on the connection between thought and its accompanying changes in nerve-tissue; it brings us face to face with the deep secret of the universe, before which, if a man feel not awed and silenced, no legends of speaking asses, floating axeheads, and dead restored to life can move him.

"Imagination is, after all, but a poor matter when it has to part company with the Understanding, and even front it hostilely in flat contradiction," says Carlyle; and with such admissions of ignorance on its lips, Science is the more insistent on the necessity of disciplining the imagination which it in no wise seeks to repress. This discipline can be effected by knowledge alone, so that the sum-total of effort to make men better be turned to useful purposes. For so undisciplined are the emotions, so largely are they the sport of intermittent gush or panic, with resulting

bungling in method and haziness in aim, that the misdirection and waste of energy is frightful.

How can it be otherwise when every orthodox worker starts with *a priori* theories of human nature which both research and experience have disproved? He is as an engineer who builds without knowledge or test of the materials which he uses. How can it be otherwise when the churches teach the innate depravity, yet, withal, full responsibility, of man; his powerlessness to do aught that is good, yet, withal, his certain doom if he accept not the conditions as to his eternal bliss which were determined in the Councils of the Trinity before the foundation of the world?

In opposition to this empirical view of the nature of man, Science will have entire revision of what constitutes sin and salvation, and of the basis of morals. It can give no place to codes of ethics which rest solely on the assumption of their supernatural origin, although admitting that such assumptions, by appealing to threats and promises of the gods, did useful work in rude and rough ages. It sees that morals are imperilled when made dependent on doctrines which are liable to be discredited or disproved. It appeals to history and to facts around in proof of the origin of moral codes in man's social needs. For where there is no society there is no sin. Therefore the bases of right and wrong lie in conduct towards one's fellows; the moral sense or conscience is the outcome of social relations, themselves the outcome of the need of living. The common interests which impel to combination involve praise or blame of the acts of each individual in the degree that they aid or hinder the well-being of all—in other words, add to their pleasure or their pain; and this praise and blame constitute the moral code, the collective or *tribal conscience*. Society, like the units of which it is made up, has to fight for its life, and all primitive laws are laws of self-preservation. Tribal self-preservation is based on sympathy between the several members, and it is therefore the ultimate foundation of the moral sense; whatever is helpful to it is *right*, whatever is a hindrance to it is *wrong*. There is, therefore, no fixed standard of right and wrong by which the actions of all men throughout all time are measured. The moral code advances with the progress of the race; conscience is a growth. That which society in rude stages of culture approves, it condemns at later and more refined stages, although such is the power of custom in investing the antique with sanctity, such the persistence of authority, and so deep its interest against change, that moral qualities are often grafted upon acts apart from any question of their bearing upon character.

Sin is, therefore, neglect of duty, or commission of wrong, to our fellow-man. To him who is guilty of it we do not say, "God is

angry with thee, seek His forgiveness," but, "Thou hast wronged thy fellow, and through this done wrong to man everywhere, nor can the thing done be undone. But sin no more." For the forgiveness of which the Churches talk, by which, through what is called an "act of faith," sin is transferred from a sinner to a Divine Being, whose self-immolation appeases Almighty anger, and secures the sinner's pardon, is an artificial sensation. It is a transaction as fictitious as an accommodation bill which passes current in so far as the transaction it pretends to represent, and the names which it bears, deceive the unwary. There is no forgiveness of sin. The effects of what is done Omnipotence cannot undo, and "forgiveness" can be only a showing forth of the charity of the wronged. "Our deeds," says George Eliot, "are like the children born to us: they live and act apart from our own will. Nay, children may be strangled, but deeds never."

It is in lifting us to a higher realm of ethics, where no illusions of "imputed sin" and "imputed righteousness" have place, that Science shows itself a preacher of righteousness. In proving the unvarying relation between cause and effect in the spiritual as in the material, in proving that we are what our ancestors made us, *plus* the action of circumstances on ourselves, and that in like manner our children inherit the good and evil, both of body and mind, that is in us, it throws upon man the responsibility of working out the salvation of man, with even deeper "fear and trembling." It shows that self-conquest—in other words, the suppression of the over-self, which is the root of sin—lies in obedience, and that obedience lies in knowledge, itself the outcome of study of the history of man. And if to know that it rests with man to make or mar the lives of others be not sufficing stimulus to learning the true that he may do the right; if to be moved by the thought of the one human heart beating beneath all phases of life; of common hopes, needs, and destinies, of which this earth, speeding through space, spinning "like fretful midge," is the theatre; if to have some ideal of a better humanity, justified by its advance thus far—if these be not incentives to the service of man, what else can avail? Whatever power the belief in a God who "is angry with the wicked every day," and who will punish them for ever, may have had in the past, has to-day practically decayed. He makes no sign; still do the wicked flourish, as in the time of the Psalmist, like green bay-trees, and the thief fears only the policeman.

Emerson says, "Every man takes care that his neighbour shall not cheat him. But a day comes when he begins to care that he do not cheat his neighbour. Then all goes well. He has changed his market-cart into a chariot of the sun." Herein lies

a bit of practical ethic, giving foothold for ascent to higher things. That the ideal lies ahead, that it enlarges, and yet recedes, as we advance towards it, is no reason for relaxing, but rather for quickening, effort. The conception of it is sufficing spur to the pursuit, though the goal be never reached.

“That low man seeks a little thing to do,  
Sees it and does it;  
This high man, with a great thing to pursue,  
Dies ere he knows it.”

What dead weight of care do morals, thus regarded, lift from the heart of man! what new energy is given to effort! Thought becomes fixed on the evolution of goodness instead of on the origin of evil; time is set free from useless speculation for profitable action; evils once deemed inherent in the nature of things, and therefore irremovable, making all labour become despair, are accounted for, and shown to be within man's power to extirpate. Surely in all this there is nothing vague, nothing unsubstantial, nothing that can be affected by decay of dogmas or modifications of confessions of faith, but *common ground* for reverence, for labour, and for hope, wherein lies nutrition for the religious sentiment.

And, in truth, the Churches are with us. They are finding themselves strong in the degree that they are taking in hand social questions, playing the part of social reformers, and as they see that their only hold upon people lies in their humanitarianism they will cease to obtrude their speculative doctrines. Many of these, one notes, have fallen to the rear, as, e.g. doctrines of eternal punishment and forensic theories of atonement. By and by, others will be dropped, and the *Quicunque vult* give place to an older and humaner creed, older than the book which contains it, and wide as the family of those who have served their generation and “fell on sleep:”—“Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him.”

## THE RELIGION OF THE ASSYRIANS.

BY CANON GEORGE RAWLINSON.

OF all the nations of remote antiquity—of those, I mean, which flourished before the rise of the Greeks and Romans into a conspicuous place—there is none which occupies a higher position, or more deserves to have a share in our thoughts and attention, than the nation of the Assyrians. “The Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon,” says the prophet Ezekiel, “fair of branches, and with a shadowing shroud, and of an high stature; and his top was among the thick boughs . . . nor was any tree in the garden of God like unto him in his beauty” (Ezek. xxxi. 3, 8). The Assyrian Empire, if we regard it as continued in the later Babylonian, lasted eight hundred years, and extended, at its acme, from the Persian Desert to the Ægean Sea and the Sahara. It included in it Persia, Media, Susiana, Babylonia, Assyria Proper, Mesopotamia, Armenia, great part of Asia Minor, Syria, Phœnicia, Palestine, Idumæa, and Egypt. It was the first example of a really *great* empire. It consolidated all Western Asia under a single head. It broke the power of the Egyptians. It made great advances in the arts. At a time when Europe was sunk in barbarism it had reached a degree of civilization far from contemptible—in most points equal, in many superior, to the boasted civilization of Egypt.

Besides the general interest attaching to Assyria from its power and position among the nations of the ancient world, a special interest must always attach to it in a Christian land from the part which it played in the history of the “chosen people”—of that “Israel of God” whereof the Christian community is the continuation and the representative. Assyria was the fated instrument in God’s hand for the destruction, first of the kingdom of Samaria, and then of the kingdom of Judæa, and so for the elevation and purification of later Judaism by the “sweet uses of adversity.” The names of Shalmaneser, Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar, must always remain “household words” in every land in which the Bible is read; and among Bible readers of any



intelligence, as well as among students of history generally, there must always be a desire to know what manner of men they were whom those great chieftains led from the banks of the Euphrates and the Tigris to those of the Jordan and the Nile, to Damascus, Samaria, Jerusalem, Memphis.

The most important element in the thought of a people, the chief influence by which their character is formed, and their inner and even their outer life determined, is their religion. If we would possess more than a superficial knowledge of the real history of nations, we must study carefully—not only the records of their external deeds, and the monuments that they have left behind them, but—principally and above all else—their religions.

With these few preliminary remarks on the importance of the subject assigned to me in this Course of Lectures, I shall proceed to grapple with the task allotted me, and endeavour to set before you, as simply and plainly as I can, the true nature of the Assyrian Religion—or, at any rate, its leading characteristics.

First, then—the Assyrian religion was a polytheism—a system in which the unity of the Godhead was broken up into fragments, and a large number of deities were presented as objects of adoration to the worshipper, each being regarded as distinct from all the rest, each having his own form, his own attributes, his own emblems, his own temples. So far as appears, there was no esoteric religion, or secret teaching, by which the gods were identified one with another, and explained to be mere aspects of a single deity. This was the case in Egypt, but not, so far as I can see, in Assyria, or Babylonia. There each god was a really distinct personage. The gods, like men, formed a community, in which councils were held, disputes took place, quarrels even might break out, one god might injure or oppress another; each acted as he pleased, according to his “own sweet will,” and wills might conflict; and so there might even be “war in heaven,” as indeed there was upon one occasion, of which I shall speak at more length further on.

Secondly, there was not even among the gods a single acknowledged chief ruler. There were certain gradations of rank, generally, though not always, observed; but no authority was exercised; many gods are called “chief of the gods,” “king of the gods,” even “god of the gods.” Each seems to be supreme in his own sphere. Any one of many may be taken by a worshipper as *his* peculiar god, and worshipped almost exclusively of the others. There is no *μοναρχία*—rather what the Greeks would have called *ἀναρχία*—“an absence of government.”

Thirdly, the polytheism is not very multitudinous. We hear,

indeed, in certain passages, of "the 4,000" and even "of the 5,000 gods;" but, practically, only some twenty distinct deities obtain frequent mention in the inscriptions. There are, indeed, a number of local divinities, river gods, country gods, town gods, and village gods—but these are suspected to be in many cases the great gods of the Pantheon, disguised under rustic appellations, while in other cases they are obscure and insignificant personages, known to few, and scarcely worshipped by any. It is not my intention to call your attention to these minor deities, but rather to ask you to concentrate your thoughts for the present on the nineteen or twenty "great gods" of the Assyrian and Babylonian Pantheon.

At the head of the Pantheon in either country stood a god, not the origin of the others, not in any real sense the fountain of divinity, but of higher rank and dignity than the rest—"the first among equals"—ordinarily named first, and assigned the titles of greatest honour, forming thus the principal, or at least the highest object of worship, both to the kings and to the people. This deity is, in Assyria, Asshur; in Babylonia, Il (or Ra). Some critics are of opinion that the two great gods are essentially one, the Assyrian Asshur being neither more nor less than Il (or Ra) localized, and regarded as the special god of Assyria, the protector of the Assyrian territory, and the tutelary divinity of the Assyrian kings. But this view is not generally accepted, and seems to rest upon no sure foundations. There is a marked difference of character between the Babylonian Il and the Assyrian Asshur. Il, in the Babylonian system, is dim and shadowy; his attributes are, comparatively speaking, indistinct; and his very name is not of frequent occurrence. Asshur in the Assyrian system is, of all of the gods, by far the most pronounced and prominent figure. No name occurs so often as his; no god has attributes so clearly marked and positive. On these grounds it has been generally held that the two are not to be identified, but to be kept distinct, and to be regarded as respectively peculiar to the two countries. I shall, therefore, speak of them separately.

Il (or Ra) was, as I have already said, a somewhat shadowy being. There is a vagueness about the very name, which simply means "god" and cannot be said to express any particular attribute. His form is never represented on the monuments, and his name is omitted from many lists, as if he were too holy to be spoken of. He does not appear to have had any special temples, and his name is rarely made an element in the personal appellations of individuals. He must, however, have been originally the tutelary deity of Babylon, which was named after him. Bab-il, or "the gate of Il."

Asshur, the Assyrian substitute for Il, was primarily and especially the tutelary deity of Assyria, and of the Assyrian monarchs. The land of Assyria bears his name without any modification; its inhabitants are "his servants," or "his people;" its troops, "the armies of the God Asshur;" its enemies, "the enemies of Asshur." The kings stand connected with him in respect of almost everything which they do. He places them upon the throne, firmly establishes them in the government, lengthens the years of their reigns, preserves their power, protects their forts and armies, directs their expeditions, gives them victory in the day of battle, makes their name celebrated, multiplies their offspring greatly, and the like. To him they look for the fulfilment of all their wishes, and especially for the establishment of their sons, and their sons' sons, on the Assyrian throne to the remotest ages. Their usual phrase, when speaking of him, is "Asshur, *my* lord." They represent themselves as passing their lives in his service. It is to spread his worship that they carry on their wars. They fight, ravage, and destroy in his name. Finally, when they subdue a country, they are careful to "set up the emblems of Asshur," and to make the people conform to his laws.

The ordinary titles of Asshur are: "The great lord," "the king of all the gods," "he who rules supreme over the gods." He is also called occasionally "the father of the gods," although that is a title which belongs more properly to another deity. He is figured as a man with a horned cap and often carrying a bow—issuing from the middle of a winged circle, and either shooting an arrow from the bow, or stretching forth his hand, as if to aid or smite. The winged circle by itself is also used as his emblem, and probably denotes his ubiquity and eternity, as the human form does his intelligence, and the horned cap his power. This emblem—the winged circle—either with or without the human figure, is an almost invariable accompaniment of Assyrian royalty. The "great king" wears it embroidered upon his robes, carries it engraved upon his seal or cylinder, represents it above his head in the rock tablets whereon he carves his image, kneels or stands in adoration before it, fights under its shadow, under its protection returns victorious, places it conspicuously upon his obelisks and other monuments; and, in all these representations, it is remarkable how, by slight modifications, he makes the emblem conform to the circumstances of his own employment at the time. When he is fighting, Asshur, too, has his arrow upon the string, and points it against the monarch's adversaries. When he is returning home victorious with the disused bow in his left hand, and his right hand outstretched and elevated, Asshur has

the same attitude. In peaceful scenes the bow disappears altogether. If the king worships, the god holds out his hand to aid ; if he is engaged in secular acts, the divine presence is thought to be sufficiently marked by the circle and the wings without the human figure.

In immediate succession to Asshur in Assyria, and Il (or Ra) in Babylonia, we find in both countries a Triad, consisting of Anu, Bel, and Hea (or Hoa). These three are called in some places specially and distinctively "the great gods." In execrations, where curses are invoked on those who shall do certain acts, they are separated off from all the other deities, and placed together in a clause, which stands at the head of the entire list of anathemas. In invocations their names follow, for the most part, immediately after the name of Asshur ; and this is their usual and proper place in all complete lists of the chief gods. Anu and Bel in the Babylonian system are brothers, both of them being sons of Il (or Ra) ; but this relationship is scarcely acknowledged in Assyria. Hea, in both countries, stands apart, unconnected with the other two, but still their equal, and joined with them in a Triad, wherein he occupies the third place.

It has been conjectured by M. François Lenormant that in this triad we have a cosmogonic myth, and that the three deities which form it represent—Anu, the primordial chaos, or matter without form ; Hea, life and intelligence, considered as moving in and animating matter ; and Bel, the organizing and creating spirit, by which matter was actually brought into subjection, and the material universe evoked out of chaos and settled in an orderly way. But it may be questioned whether the veil which hides the inner meaning of the Assyrian religion, if it had an inner meaning, is as yet sufficiently lifted to entitle mere conjectures on its true import to much attention. For my own part, I believe that Anu, Bel, and Hea were originally the gods respectively of the earth, of the heavens, and of the waters, thus corresponding in the main to the well-known Pluto, Zeus or Jupiter, and Poseidon or Neptune, of the Greeks and Romans, who divided between them the dominion over the visible creation. But this early belief became, in course of time, overlaid to a great extent with other notions ; and though Hea continued always to have, more or less, the character of a water deity, Anu and Bel ceased to have peculiar spheres, and became merely "great gods," with a general superintendence over the world, and with no very marked difference of powers.

Anu is commonly spoken of as "the old Anu," "the original chief," "the king of the lower world," and "the lord of spirits and demons." There is one text in which he seems to be called

"the father of the gods;" but the reading is doubtful. We cannot identify as his any one of the divine forms which appear on the Assyrian or Babylonian cylinders or other monuments; nor can we assign to him any distinct emblem, unless it be that of the single upright wedge, which represents him on the Chaldæan numeration tablets. This single upright wedge has the numerical power of "sixty;" and sixty appears to have been assigned to Anu as his special number. Though a "great god," he was not one towards whom much preference was shown. His name is scarcely ever found as an element in royal or other appellations; the kings do not very often mention it, and only one monarch—the first Tiglath-pileser (about B.C. 1130)—speaks of himself as Anu's special votary.

The second god of the first Triad—the god Bel—familiarily known to us by the mentions of him which occur in the canonical Scriptures and in the Apocrypha, is one of the most marked and striking figures in the Pantheon alike of Babylonia and of Assyria. Bel is "the god of lords," "the father of the gods," "the creator," "the mighty prince," and "the *just* prince of the gods." He plays a leading part in the mythological legends, which form so curious a feature in the Babylonian and Assyrian religion. In the *History of Creation* we are told that Bel made the earth and the heaven; that he formed man by a mixture of his own blood with earth, and also formed beasts, and that afterwards he created the sun and the moon, and the five planets. In the *War of the Gods* we find him contending with the great dragon, Tiamat, and after a terrible single combat destroying her by flinging a thunderbolt into her open mouth. He also, in conjunction with Hea, plans the defence when the seven spirits of evil rise in rebellion, and the dwelling-place of the gods is assaulted by them. The titles of Bel generally express dominion. He is "the Lord" *par excellence*, which is the exact meaning of his name in Assyrian; he is "the king of all the spirits," "the lord of the world," and again "the lord of all the countries." Babylon and Nineveh are both of them under his special care, Nineveh having the title of "the city of Bel" in some passages of the inscriptions. His chief temples were at Babylon, at Nipur, at Calah (now Nimrud), and at Duraba (now Akkerkuf).

Hea (or Hoā), the third god of the first Triad, ranks immediately after Bel in the complete lists of Assyrian deities. He is emphatically one of the "great gods," and is called "the king," "the great inventor," and "the determiner of destinies." I have already remarked that he is especially connected with the element of water, and hence he is "the king of the deep," "the king of

rivers," "the lord of fountains," and to a certain extent "the lord of the harvest." In the legend of Creation he is joined with Bel in the office of guardian, and watches over the regularity of the planetary courses. In the *War of the Gods* he and Bel plan the defence, after which Hea commits the execution of the plans made to his son, Mesodach. In the Flood legend Hea naturally plays an important part, since water is his element. It is he who announces to Hasis-adra, the Babylonian Noah, that a deluge is about to destroy mankind, and commands him to build a great ship, in order that he may escape it. It is he again who opposes the wish of Bel to make the destruction complete, and persuades him to let Hasis-adra and his family come out safe from the ark. In the tale of Ishtar's descent into Hades, Hea's counsel is sought by the moon-god; and by a skilful device he obtains the restoration of the queen of love to the upper world. Indeed, throughout the whole of the mythology we find all clever inventions and well-laid plans ascribed to him, so that his history quite justifies his title of "lord of deep thoughts." Hea is probably intended by the Oë of Helladius, and the Oannes of Berosus, who came up out of the Persian Gulf, and instructed the first settlers on the Lower Tigris and Euphrates in letters, science, religion, law, and agriculture.

In direct succession to the three gods of the first Triad—Anu, Bel, and Hea (or Hoa), we find a second still more widely recognized Triad, comprising the moon-god, the sun-god, and the god of the atmosphere. There is much difference of opinion with respect to the name of the last god of these three, which is never spelt phonetically, but only represented by a monogram. He has been called Iva (or Yav), Vul, Bin, Yem (or Im), and recently Rimmon. It does not much signify which of these names is preferred, as all rest upon conjecture; but, since convenience requires that he should be spoken of by a single definite appellation, I shall adopt that of "Vul," which was originally given to him by my brother. The second Triad then is one consisting of Sin, Shamas, and Vul, the gods respectively of the moon, the sun, and the atmosphere.

It is very noticeable that in Assyria and Babylonia the moon-god took precedence of the sun-god. Night was probably more agreeable to the inhabitants of those hot regions than day; and the cool placid time when they could freely contemplate the heavens, and make their stellar and other observations, was especially grateful to the priestly astronomers, who had the superintendence and arrangement of the religion. Sin, the moon—the first element in the name Sinakhirib (Sennacherib), is thus one of the leading deities. He is called "the chief of the gods of

heaven and earth," "the king of the gods," and even "the god of the gods." These seem, however, to be honorific expressions, used by his votaries in the warmth of their hearts, with some touch of Oriental hyperbole. Sin was more properly "the illuminator," "he who dwells in the sacred heavens," "he who circles round the heavens," and "the lord of the month." Further, for some recondite reason which is not explained, he was selected to preside over architecture; and, in this connection, he is "the supporting architect," "the strengthener of fortifications," and "the lord of building." A close bond of sympathy united Sin with the two other members of the second Triad. When the seven spirits of evil made war in heaven, and directed their main attack upon Sin, as the chief leader of the angelic host, Shamas and Vul instantly came to his aid, withstood the evil spirits, and, fighting firmly side by side with Sin, succeeded in repulsing them. The three gods are frequently conjoined in invocations, anathemas, and the like. In offerings and festivals, however, Sin is united with Shamas only, the place of Vul being taken by a goddess who is entitled "the divine mistress of the world."

Sin was among the gods most widely and devoutly worshipped, both in Babylonia and Assyria. He had temples at Ur, Borsippa, Babylon, Calah, and Dur Sargina. The third month of the year, called Sivan, was dedicated to him. In another month not so dedicated, we find sacrifice to him prescribed on nine days of the thirty. His name was widely used as an element in royal and other appellations, as in Sennacherib, Sin-iddina, Sin-gasit, Naram-Sin, Sin-taggil, Sin-shar-uzur, and the like. A crescent moon is the ordinary emblem of Sin, but sometimes he is represented in a human form, with a long robe about him, and a triple crown upon his head, the crown being surmounted by a crescent.

Shamas, the sun-god, occupies the middle position in the second Triad, which is either "Vul, Shamas, Sin," or "Sin, Shamas, Vul," but more commonly the latter. His titles are either general or special. In a general way he is called "the establisher of heaven and earth," "the judge of heaven and earth," "the warrior of the world," and "the regent of all things;" while, with direct reference to his physical nature, he is "the lord of fire," "the light of the gods," "the ruler of the day," and "he who illumines the expanse of heaven and earth." The Assyrian kings regard him as affording them especial help in war. He is "the supreme ruler, who casts a favourable eye on expeditions," "the vanquisher of the king's enemies," "the breaker up of opposition." He "casts his motive influence" over the monarchs, and "causes them to assemble their chariots and

their warriors ;" he " goes forth with their armies," and enables them to extend their dominions ; he chases their enemies before them, causes opposition to cease, and brings them back with victory to their own country. Besides this, in time of peace he helps them to sway the sceptre of power, and to rule over their subjects with authority. It seems that, from observing the manifest agency of the material sun in stimulating all the functions of nature, the Assyrians and Babylonians came to the conclusion that the sun-god exercised a similar influence over the minds of men, and was the great motive agent in human history.

The worship of Shamas was universal. The seventh month, Tisri was dedicated to him, and, in the second Elul—the intercalary month—he had, like the moon-god, nine festivals. His emblem appears upon almost all the religious cylinders ; and in almost all lists of the gods, his name holds a high place. Sometimes he is a member of a Triad, composed of himself together with Sin and Asshur. In the mythological legends, however, he is not very frequently mentioned. We find him, indeed, defending the moon-god, in conjunction with Vul, when the seven spirits make their assault upon heaven ; and in the Deluge tablets we are told that it was he who actually made the Flood. But otherwise the Assyrian mythology is silent concerning him, offering in this respect a remarkable contrast to the Egyptian, where the sun is the principal figure.

Vul, the god of the atmosphere, who completes the second Triad, has, on the whole, a position quite equal to that held by Sin and Shamas, whom he even, occasionally, precedes in the lists. Some kings seem to place him on a par with Anu, or even with Asshur, recognizing Anu and Vul, or Asshur and Vul, as especially " the great gods," and as their own peculiar guardians. In a general way, Vul corresponds with the Indra of the early Hindoos, or the " Jupiter Tonans " of the Romans, being " the prince of the power of the air," the lord of the whirlwind and tempest, and the wielder of the thunderbolt. His most common titles are, " the lord of the air," " the minister of heaven and earth," and " he who makes the tempest to rage." He is regarded as the destroyer of crops, the rooter up of trees, the scatterer of the harvest ; famine, scarcity, and even their consequence, pestilence, are ascribed to him. He is said to hold in his hands a " flaming sword," with which he effects his ravages ; and this " flaming sword," which probably represents lightning, seems to form his emblem on the tablets and cylinders, where it is figured as a double or triple bolt. But Vul has also a softer character. As the god of the atmosphere, he gives the rain ;



and hence he is "the careful and beneficent chief," "the giver of abundance," and "the lord of fecundity." In this capacity he is naturally chosen to preside over canals, the great fertilizers in Mesopotamia; and thus we find among his titles "the lord of canals," and "the establisher of works of irrigation."

Next in succession to the eight gods already described, may be placed six goddesses, closely connected with six of them. It is a general rule of Oriental mythologies, that each male principle shall have a female counterpart. From this rule, in the Babylonian and Assyrian mythology, the highest of the gods, Il and Asshur, are exempt; but otherwise almost all the principal deities are united in pairs, of whom one is male and the other female. Anu has a wife called Anat or Anata, who is a pale and shadowy personage, the mere faint reflection of her husband, whose name she receives, merely modified by a feminine termination. Bel or Bil has a wife, Bilat, known to the classical writers as Beltis or Mylitta—a term standing to Bil as Anat to Anu, but designating a far more substantial personage. Beltis is "the mother of the gods," "the *great* goddess," "the great lady," "the queen of the lands," and "the queen of fecundity." She corresponds to the Cybelé of the Phrygians, the Rhea of the Greeks, and the "Magna Mater" or "Bona Dea" of the Romans. Occasionally, she adds to this character the attributes of Bellona, and even of Diana, being spoken of as presiding over war and hunting. The wife of Hea has been called Dav-kina, Nin-azu, and Ninkigal. She is called "the queen of Hades," and "the lady of the house of death." She was the mistress of the realms below, while on earth she had the special office of watching and soothing the last hours of the dying. To the wife of Sin, no proper name is given; but she is frequently associated with her husband under the appellation of "the great lady." The wife of Shamas is Gula or Anunit. She was, like Beltis, a "*great* goddess," but had a less distinctive character, being little more than a female sun. Finally, Vul had a wife called Shala or Tala, whose common title is *sarrat*, "queen," but who is a colourless and insignificant personage.

We now come to a group of five deities, who are connected together by the fact that they have, all of them, an unmistakably *astral* character. There are Nin or Ninip, Marduk or Merodach, Nergal, Ishtar, and Nebo, who correspond respectively to the planets Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, and Mercury.

Nin (or Ninip), who presided over the most distant of the visible planets, Saturn, was more an object of worship in Assyria than in Babylonia. He has been called "the Assyrian Hercules;" and no doubt he in many respects resembles that hero of the classical

nations. Among his titles are the following: "The lord of the brave," "the warlike," "the champion," "the warrior who subdues foes," "the reducer of the disobedient," "the exterminator of rebels," "the powerful lord," "the exceeding strong god," and "he whose sword is good." He presides in a great measure both over war and hunting. Most of the Assyrian monarchs represent themselves as going out to war under his auspices, and ascribe their successes mainly to his interposition. He is especially useful to them in the subjection of rebels. He also upon some occasions incites them to engage in the chase, and aids them strenuously in their encounters with wild bulls and lions. It is thought that he was emblematically portrayed in the winged and human-headed bull which forms so striking a feature in the architectural erections of the Assyrians.

As Nin was a favourite Assyrian, so Merodach was a favourite Babylonian, god. From the earliest times the Babylonian monarchs placed him in the highest rank of deities, worshipping him in conjunction with Anu, Bel, and Hea, the three gods of the first Triad. The great temple of Babylon, known to the Greeks as the "Temple of Bel," was certainly dedicated to him; and it would, therefore, seem that the later Babylonians, at any rate, must have applied to him the name of Bel, or "lord," which in earlier times had designated a different member of their Pantheon. Merodach's ordinary titles are "the great," "the great lord," "the prince," "the prince of the gods," and "the august god." He is also called "the judge," "the most ancient," "he who judges the gods," "the eldest son of heaven," and, in one place, "the lord of battles." Occasionally, he has still higher and seemingly exclusive designations, such as "the great lord of eternity," "the king of heaven and earth," "the lord of all beings," "the chief of the gods," and "the god of gods." But these titles do not seem to be meant exclusively. Merodach is held in considerable honour among the Assyrians, being often coupled with Asshur, or with Asshur and Nebo, as a war-god, one by whom kings gain victories and obtain the destruction of their enemies. But it is in Babylonia, and especially in the later Babylonian Empire under Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar, that his worship culminates. It is then that all the epithets of the highest honour are accumulated upon him, and that he becomes an almost exclusive object of worship; it is then that we find such expressions as—"I supplicate the king of gods, the lord of lords, in Borsippa, the city of his loftiness;" and "O god Merodach, great lord, lord of the house of the gods, light of the gods, father, even for thy high honour, which changeth not, a temple have I built!"

In his stellar character Merodach represented the planet Jupiter, with which he was supposed to have a very intimate connection. The eighth month (Marchesvan) was dedicated to him. In the second Elul, he had three festivals—on the third, on the seventh, and on the sixteenth day.

Nergal, who presided over the planet Mars, was essentially a war god. His name signifies "the great man," or "the great hero;" and his commonest titles are "the mighty hero," "the king of battle," "the destroyer," "the champion of the gods," and "the great brother." He "goes before" the kings in their warlike expeditions, and helps them to confound and scatter their enemies. Nor is he above lending them his assistance when they indulge in the pleasures of the chase. One of his titles is "the god of hunting;" and, while originally subordinated to Nin in this relation, ultimately he outstrips his rival, and becomes the especial patron of hunters and sportsmen. Asshur-bani-pal, who is conspicuous among the Assyrian kings for his intense love of field sports, uniformly ascribes his successes to Nergal, and does not even join with him any other deity. Nergal's emblem was the human-headed and winged lion, which is usually seen, as it were on guard, at the entrances of the royal palaces.

Ishtar, who was called Nana by the Babylonians, corresponded both in name and attributes with the Astarte (or Ashtoreth) of the Phœnicians and Syrians. Like the Greek Aphrodité and the Roman Venus, she was the queen of love and beauty, the goddess who presided over marriage, and even over the loves of animals. Her own frailty was notorious. In one of the Izdubar legends she courts that romantic individual, who, however, declines her advances, reminding her that her favour had always proved fatal to those persons on whom she had previously bestowed her affections. There can be little doubt that—in Babylon at any rate—she was worshipped with unchaste rites, and that her cult was thus of a corrupting and debasing character. But, besides this soft and sensual aspect, Ishtar had a further and a nobler one. She corresponded not to Venus only, but also to Bellona, being called "the goddess of war and battle," "the queen of victory," "she who arranges battles," and "she who defends from attack." The Assyrian kings very generally unite her with Asshur in the accounts which they give of their military expeditions, speaking of their forces as those which Asshur and Ishtar have committed to their charge, of their battles as fought in the service of Asshur and Ishtar, and of their triumphs as the result of Asshur and Ishtar aiding them and exalting them above their enemies. Ishtar had also some general titles of a lofty but vague character; she was called "the fortunate," "the happy,"

"the great goddess," "the mistress of heaven and earth," and "the queen of all the gods and goddesses." In her stellar character she presided over the planet Venus; and the sixth month, Elul, was dedicated to her.

Nebo, the last of the five planetary deities, presided over Mercury. It was his special function to have under his charge learning and knowledge. He is called "the god who possesses intelligence," "he who hears from afar," "he who teaches," or "he who teaches and instructs." The tablets of the royal library at Nineveh are said to contain "the wisdom of Nebo." He is also, like Mercury, the minister of the gods, but scarcely their messenger—an office which belongs to a god called Paku. At the same time, as has been noticed in the case of other gods, Nebo has a number of general titles, implying divine power, which, if they had belonged to him alone, would have seemed to prove him to be the Supreme Deity. He is "the lord of lords, who has no equal in favour," "the supreme chief," "the sustainer," "the supporter," "the ever-ready," "the guardian of heaven and earth," "the lord of the constellations," "the holder of the sceptre of power," "he who grants to kings the sceptre of royalty for the governance of their people." It is chiefly by his omission from several lists, combined with his humble place when he is mentioned together with the really "great gods" that we are assured of his occupying a (comparatively) low position in the general pantheon.

The planetary gods had in most cases a female counterpart. Nebo was closely associated with a goddess called Urmit or Tasmit; Nergal with one called Laz, and Merodach with Zirpanit or Zir-banit. Nin, the son of Bel and Beltis, is sometimes made the husband of his mother, but otherwise has no female counterpart. Ishtar is sometimes coupled with Nebo in a way that might suggest her being his wife, if it were not that that position is certainly occupied by Urmit.

The Assyrians and Babylonians worshipped their gods in shrines or chapels of no very great size, to which, however, was frequently attached a lofty tower, built in stages, which were sometimes as many as seven. The tower could be ascended by steps on the outside, and was usually crowned by a small, but richly adorned, chapel. The gods were represented by images, which were either of stone or metal, and which bore the human form, excepting in two instances. Nin and Nergal were portrayed, as the Jews perhaps portrayed the cherubim, by animal forms of great size and grandeur, having human heads and huge outstretched wings. There was nothing hideous, or even grotesque, about the representations of the Assyrian gods.

The object aimed at was to fill the spectator with feelings of awe and reverence; and the divine figures have, in fact, universally an appearance of calm placid strength and majesty, which is solemn and impressive.

The gods were worshipped, as generally in the ancient world, by prayer, praise, and sacrifice. Prayer was offered both for oneself and others. The "sinfulness of sin" was deeply felt, and the divine anger deprecated with much earnestness. "O my lord," says one suppliant, "my sins are many, my trespasses are great; and the wrath of the gods has plagued me with disease, and sickness, and sorrow. I fainted, but no one stretched forth his hand; I groaned, but no one drew nigh; I cried aloud, but no one heard. O Lord, do not thou abandon thy servant. In the waters of the great storm do thou lay hold of his hand. The sins which he has committed do thou turn to righteousness." Special intercession was made for the Assyrian kings. Praise was even more frequent than prayer. Hymns to the gods are numerous. Sacrifice almost always accompanied prayer and praise. Every day in the year seems to have been sacred to some deity or deities; and some sacrifice or other was offered every day by the monarch, who thus set an example to his subjects, which they were probably not slow to follow. The principal sacrificial animals were bulls, oxen, sheep, and gazelles. Libations of wine, and the burning of incense, were also parts of the recognized worship; and offerings might be made of anything valuable.

It is an interesting question how far the Assyrians and Babylonians entertained any confident expectation of a future life; and, if so, what view they took of it. That the idea did not occupy a prominent place in their minds, that there was a strong contrast in this respect between them and the people of Egypt, is palpable from the very small number of passages in which anything like an allusion to a future life can be even suspected. Still, there certainly seem to be places in which the continued existence of the dead is assumed, and where the happiness of the good and the wretchedness of the wicked in the future state are indicated. In one passage the happiness of the king in another world seems to be prayed for. In two or three others, prayer is offered for a departing soul in terms like the following:—"May the Sun give him life, and Merodach grant him an abode of happiness!" Or, "To the Sun, the greatest of the gods, may he ascend; and may the Sun, the greatest of the gods, receive his soul into his holy hands!" The nature of the happiness expected may be gathered from occasional notices, where the soul is represented as clad in a white radiant garment,

as dwelling in the presence of the gods, and as partaking of celestial food in the abodes of blessedness. On the other hand, Hades, the receptacle of the wicked after death, is spoken of as "the abode of darkness and famine"—the place "where earth is men's food, and their nourishment clay; where light is not seen, but in darkness they dwell; where ghosts, like birds, flutter their wings; and on the door and the doorposts the dust lies undisturbed." Different degrees of wickedness seem to meet with different and appropriate punishments. There is one place—apparently a penal fire—reserved for unfaithful wives and husbands, and for youths who have dishonoured their bodies. M. Lenormant seems, therefore, to be in error when he says that "though the Assyrians recognized a place of departed spirits, yet it was one in which there was no trace of a distinction of rewards and punishments."

Among the sacred legends of the Babylonians and Assyrians the following were the most remarkable. They believed that at a remote date, before the creation of the world, there had been war in heaven. Seven spirits, created by Anu to be his messengers, took council together, and resolved to revolt. "Against high heaven, the dwelling place of Anu, the king, they plotted evil," and unexpectedly made a fierce attack. The moon-god, the sun-god, and Vul, the god of the atmosphere, withstood them, and after a fearful struggle beat them off. Then there was peace for a while. But once more, at a later date, a fresh revolt broke out. The hosts of heaven were assembled together, in number five thousand, and were engaged in singing a psalm of praise to Anu, when suddenly discord arose. "With a loud cry of contempt" a portion of the angelic choir "broke up the holy song," uttering wicked blasphemies, and so "spoiling, confusing, confounding, the hymn of praise." Asshur was invited to put himself at the head of the rebels, but "refused to go forth with them." Their leader, who is unnamed, took the form of a dragon, and in that shape contended with the god Bel, who proved victorious in the combat, and slew his adversary by means of a thunderbolt, which he flung into the dragon's gaping mouth. Upon this the entire host of the wicked angels took to flight, and was driven to the abode of the seven spirits of evil, where they were forced to remain, their return to heaven being forbidden. In their room man was created.

The Chaldæan legend of Creation, according to Berosus, was the following: "In the beginning all was darkness and water, and therein were generated monstrous animals of strange and peculiar shapes. There were men with two wings, and some even with four, and with two faces, and others with two heads, a man's and

a woman's; and there were men with the heads and horns of goats, and men with hoofs like horses; and some with the upper parts of a man joined to the lower parts of a horse, like centaurs; and there were bulls with human heads, dogs with four bodies and with fishes' tails; men and horses with dogs' heads; creatures with the heads and bodies of horses, but with the tails of fish; and other animals mixing the forms of various beasts. Moreover there were monstrous fishes and reptiles and serpents, and divers other creatures which had borrowed something from each other's shapes, of all which the likenesses are still preserved in the temple of Bel. A woman ruled them all, by name Omorka, which means 'the sea.' Then Bel came forward and split the woman in twain; and of the one half of her he made the heaven, and of the other half the earth; and the beasts that were in her he caused to perish. And he split the darkness, and divided the heaven and the earth asunder, and set the world in order, and the animals that could not bear the light perished. Bel, upon this, seeing that the earth was desolate, yet teeming with productive power, commanded one of the gods to cut off his head, and to mix the blood which flowed forth with earth, and form men therewith, and beasts that could bear the light. So man was made, and was intelligent, being a partaker of the divine wisdom. Likewise Bel make the stars, and the sun and moon, and the five planets."

The legend of the descent of Ishtar into Hades runs as follows: "To the land of Hades, the land of her desire, Ishtar, the daughter of the moon-god Sin, turned her mind. When Ishtar arrived at the gate of Hades, to the keeper of the gate she spake: 'O Keeper of the entrance, open thy gate! Open thy gate, I say again, that I may enter in! If thou openest not thy gate, if thou dost not let me in, I will assault the door, the gate I will break down, I will attack the entrance, I will split open the portals. I will raise the dead to be the devourers of the living! Upon the living the dead shall prey!' Then the porter opened his mouth and spake, and thus he said to great Ishtar: 'Stay, lady, do not shake down the door; I will go and inform Queen Ninkigal.' So the porter went in, and to Ninkigal said: 'Curses thy sister Ishtar utters; yea, she blasphemes thee with fearful curses.' And Ninkigal, hearing his words, grew pale, like a flower when cut from the stem. Like the stalk of a reed she shook. And she said, 'I will cure her rage; I will speedily cure her fury. Her curses I will repay. Light up consuming flames! Light up a blaze of straw! Be her doom with the husbands who left their wives; be her doom with the wives who forsook their lords; be her doom with the youths of dishonoured lives. Go, porter, and

open the gate for her ; but strip her, as some have been stripped ere now.' The porter went and opened the gate. 'Lady of Tiggaba, enter,' he said ; enter, it is permitted. The Queen of Hades to meet thee comes.' So the first gate let her in ; but she was stopped, and there the great crown was taken from her head. 'Keeper, do not remove from me the crown that is on my head.' 'Excuse it, lady, the queen of the land insists upon its removal.' The next gate let her in, but she was stopped, and there the earrings were taken from her ears. 'Keeper, do not take off from me the earrings from my ears.' 'Excuse it, lady, the queen of the land insists upon their removal.' The third gate let her in, but she was stopped, and there the precious stones were taken from her head. 'Keeper, do not take off from me the gems that adorn my head.' 'Excuse it, lady, the queen of the land insists on their removal.' The fourth gate let her in, but she was stopped, and there the small jewels were taken from her brow. 'Keeper, do not take off from me the small jewels that deck my brow.' 'Excuse it, lady, the queen of the land insists upon their removal.' The fifth gate let her in, but she was stopped, and there the girdle was taken from her waist. 'Keeper, do not take off from me the girdle that girds my waist.' 'Excuse it, lady, the queen of the land insists upon its removal.' The sixth gate let her in, but she was stopped, and there the gold rings were taken from her hands and feet. 'Keeper, do not take off from me the gold rings of my hands and feet.' 'Excuse it, lady, the queen of the land insists upon their removal.' The seventh gate let her in, but she was stopped, and there the last garment was taken from her body. 'Keeper, do not take off, I pray, the last garment from my body.' 'Excuse it, lady, the queen of the land insists on its removal.'

"After Mother Ishtar had descended into Hades Ninkigal saw her and derided her to her face. Then Ishtar lost her reason, and heaped curses upon the other. Ninkigal upon this opened her mouth and spake : 'Go, Namtar, and bring her out for punishment. Afflict her with disease of the eye, the side, the feet, the heart, the head.'

"The divine messenger of the gods lacerated his face before them. The assembly of the gods was full. The Sun came, and with him the Moon his father, and thus spake he weeping unto Hea, the king. 'Ishtar has descended into the earth, and has not risen again ; and ever since the time that Mother Ishtar descended into hell the master had ceased from commanding, the slave had ceased from obeying.' Then the god Hea in the depth of his mind formed a design ; he modelled for her escape the figure of a man in clay. 'Go and save her, Phantom,' he said,



‘Present thyself at the portal of Hades; the seven gates of Hades will all open before thee. Ninkigal will see thee and take pleasure because of thee. When her mind has grown calm, and her anger has worn itself away, awe her with the names of the great gods. Then prepare thy frauds. On deceitful tricks fix thy mind. Use the very chiefest of thy deceits. Bring forth fish out of an empty vessel. *That* will astonish Ninkigal, and to Ishtar she will restore her dress. Thy reward—a great reward—for these things shall not fail. Go, Phantom, save her, and the assembly of the people shall crown thee! Meats, the best in the city, shall be thy food! Wines, the most delicious in the city, shall be thy drink. A royal palace shall be thy dwelling—a throne of state thy seat. Magician and conjuror shall kiss the hem of thy garment.’

“Ninkigal opened her mouth and spake; to her messenger, Namtar, command she gave: ‘Go, Namtar, the temple of justice adorn! Deck the images! Deck the altars! Bring out Anunnak, and let him take his seat on a throne of gold! Pour out for Ishtar the water of life; from my realms let her depart.’ Namtar obeyed; he adorned the temple, decked the images, decked the altars; brought out Anunnak and set him on a throne of gold; poured out for Ishtar the water of life, and suffered her to depart. Then the first gate let her out, and gave her back the garment of her form. The second gate let her out, and gave her back the jewels for her hands and feet. The third gate let her out and gave her back the girdle for her waist. The fourth gate let her out and gave her back the small gems she had worn upon her brow. The fifth gate let her out and gave her back the precious stones that had been upon her head. The sixth gate let her out and gave her back the earrings that were taken from her ears. And the seventh gate let her out, and gave her back the crown she had carried on her head.”

So ends this curious legend. There are many others, especially an account of the Deluge, which is of great interest. But the inexorable march of time warns me that I must not trespass longer upon your patience, but must thank you for your kind attention, and make my bow.

## THE RELIGION OF BABYLONIA.

BY W. ST. CHAD BOSCAWEN.

IN coming before you this afternoon, to lecture on the Religion of Babylonia, I feel that I stand in a different position from the lecturers who have preceded me. Unlike the learned scholars who have spoken to you regarding the teachings, creeds and ceremonies of Buddhism, Hinduism, or Mohammedanism, I can bring before you no sacred canon of books upon which to base my analysis of this ancient religion. Among the sacred writings of the land of Chaldea—we find no class of works which can be studied in the same systematic manner, or submitted to the same analysis as the *Vedas*, the *Sutras*, or the *Quran*. There is another difficulty which we encounter upon the threshold of the exposition of the principal features of the history of religions development in Chaldea. It carries us back to so remote an antiquity, before the birth of the most ancient of the religions with which we are familiar, and which have formed the data upon which the students of the science of comparative religious have formulated the laws governing the growth of religions in general, that it is extremely difficult to trace its growth and development in accordance with those laws which are applicable to the Aryan and other systems.

Our earliest inscriptions from the cities of Southern Chaldea carry us back to a period certainly long prior to B.C. 3800, and yet these inscriptions prove that religion had already passed through more than one of the earlier stages of development. Animism or Shamanism, the crude cultus of the magician and sorcerer, ever in contact with the evil opponents in nature, the spirits which waged war against man had passed away and given place to the worship of the Creator God (*Dimmera*). While, however, this progress had been attained, and a crude theocracy formulated, yet the older creeds still lingered on and intermingled with the religion of the period; and fragments of their litanies and liturgies are still preserved to us.

It is in this mixed character of the religion in the inscriptions that one of our chief difficulties is found.

The sacred literature is by no means scanty; thousands of tablets exist in our museums, which contain prayers, litanies, and liturgical texts. Our difficulty lies rather, however, in the fact that these tablets present no regular arrangements, as to class, date, or authorship; and this is still further complicated by the fact that many of the tablets are rather to be regarded as scattered pages of lost works than complete works in themselves.

Fragmentary, varied in date and character, as most of these tablets are, the patient study and research of such able scholars as the late M. François Lenormant in France, and the Rev. Professor A. H. Sayce in England, have done much to introduce system and order where chaos formerly existed; and to enable us to ascertain, with some degree of approximation, the oldest of the religious books of Chaldea. Among these tablets are a large number whose religious teaching centres round the ancient city of Eridu. This ancient city, the older name of which was *Eri-dugga* ("the Holy City"), was the Jerusalem, the Umritza, the Mecca, of Chaldea. Situated on the shores of the Persian Gulf, which at that remote period came much farther inland<sup>1</sup> than at the present day, it was the sacred city of Ea, the all-wise god of the sea. Ea was the god not only of the material watery sea, but also of the mystic deep,<sup>2</sup> the *Oceanos* which surrounded the earth like a serpent, and which was his symbol.

Here then grew up the creed of the worship of the sea-god. They heard his voice in the murmur of the waves, and in the ebbing and flowing tide.<sup>3</sup> They saw his anger in the stormy waves, which lashed themselves with fury, and made the sea wild with tossing billows. In the deep depths of its coral caves he dwelt—invisible to men, yet knowing all things.

It is difficult to trace the origin of this cult; it is, perhaps, to be attributed to a tribe who entered Chaldea from the sea, or who, at any rate, were a race of navigators, as shown by the epithets of their god: "lord of the boatment," "lord of ships," "lord of sea and rivers," all of which are those of a seafaring people. We have certainly a trace of this early school of religious teaching preserved in the legend of Oannes, recorded by Berosus. This strange fish-man rose day by day from the waters of the Erythræan Sea, to teach men the first elements of civilization. In this

<sup>1</sup> The site of Eridu is now marked by the mounds of Abu Shahrein on the east bank of the Euphrates, about twenty miles south of Mughn, or Ur. Calculating the growth of alluvial at a similar proportion to that of the present day, about six feet per annum, it must have been earlier than B.C. 3000, considerably, when Eridu was an open port on the shores of the Gulf.

<sup>2</sup> This region was called Absu or Apsu, the Apason of Damascius, and is explained by *Bit nemek*, "the house of deep knowledge."

<sup>3</sup> W. A. I., ii. 18-30-35.

tradition the epithets found on the tablets: "the wise one," "the intelligent," "the one who knows all things," are evidently embraced in the character of the instructor applied to Oannes. In these older tablets, partially magical, we find the devotee in his trouble turning to Ea to aid him to remove his sickness or drive away a malevolent foe—but the holy one, while being the supreme god and father of all, holds no direct communication with men. They hear his voice in the waves, they feel his presence and his breath in the cool breeze at eventide. "In the innermost recesses we have smelt his pure breath," says one of the hymns. Thus he made himself manifest like Yaveh to Adam in the garden, in the cool of the evening, but they saw him not. A mediator was found!! Day by day, as they looked toward the eastern horizon bounding the sea, they saw a bright being rise from the sea. Each day he rose from it, bringing with him light and brightness, and driving away the dread darkness, and all day long he remained with men, casting over them his all-seeing eye; when once again at even he sank to rest in his western home on the border of the far-distant sea. Surely this bright being must be a child of the sea-god. Each day he left his father's house and came forth in his character of "protector of good men" (*Silik-mulu-dugga*), and each night he returned to his father's house in the mysterious region of the *Absu*, "the house of deep knowledge." "Surely," they said, "he must be our messenger to the all-wise divine father." Thus, through all these older hymns, we find the teaching of the worship of Ea and his communion with men by the meditation of his son, *Mardugga*, "the holy son," which was afterwards corrupted into Marduk or Merodach. The epithets applied to Merodach in these hymns, dating from the third millennium before the Christian Era, are very remarkable, and show a high development of anthropomorphism; "Merodach, substance of myself;" "Merodach, firstborn of the deep (*apsi*), thou canst make pure and prosperous;" "Merodach, the son of Eridu." It was Merodach who bore to his father the plaint of the sick and sinful: "To his father he approached, his message he repeated, 'O my father, the disease of the head is fallen upon the man.'" It is from his father that he receives the instruction to heal: "O my son, what dost thou not know? What shall I tell to thee more? What I know thou knowest. Go, my son Merodach, take the man to the house of purification, and remove his ban and expel his curse."

The "protector of good men" (*Silik-mulu-dugga*) became himself the god of good men, the god of goodness, the *good god*.

Here, then, the element of dualism was introduced, and its appearance in Chaldean mythology is most interesting and

extremely valuable to students of the religious developments of surrounding nations.

Darkness and night were to the early myth-maker the representatives of evil. It was at night that the demons, the vampires, and ghoul-like foes of man came forth to war against him. The demon of chaos, the *bis-bis tiamat* or dragon of the sea, was the queen of primæval night, and the ruler of the powers of evil. Between the powers of evil and darkness, and Merodach, the holy son, the offspring of his all-wise father Ea, the *good god*, there was a never-ceasing war—a dread struggle waged morn after morn and eve after eve.

Each morning the bright one rose from his home, the dark serpent of night, the serpent with seven heads and seven tails, the hebdominal serpent, coiled round the earth holding it in bondage. Through the darkness darts the "first ray of light," the arrow of the god, like the arrow of Apollo or the spear of Michael. The serpent is wounded—the wound grows wider and wider, the edges are tinged with golden red, the blood of the dragon, who slowly uncoils. Through the broken coil comes the conquering bright Sun-god, clad in glistening armour, and armed with all the panoply of war. His curved sword or sabre, his mace, his sacred bow made of the wood of the tree of the gods, and his quiver full of death-dealing arrows. Like Mithra, Michael, or Apollo, he comes forth as the warrior of the gods to crush the evil one.

The serpent, defeated, sinks slowly away, and her allies, the black storm-clouds, lie in heaps on the horizon like flies. The victor "crushes the brain of the serpent with his mace." The head of the serpent is bruised, and victory rests with goodness and right.

Eventide draws near, the victor of the morn has made his triumphal progress o'er the azure field of heaven, and now sinks to his home in the west, where the gates of the setting sun guarded by the Scorpion Kerubim open to receive him. Scarce has he reached the threshold, when there creeps slowly on his heel the reborn serpent of night, and the victor, like Achilles, is wounded in his vulnerable part. Thus, day by day, the prophecy in Genesis finds its repetition in nature. The head of the serpent is crushed and bruised, yet night by night he comes upon the path of the victor to bruise his heel.

Thus we find in the old mythology of Chaldea, as in those of the Aryan and Semite, the myth of the daily recurring war between light and darkness, between good and evil, with its beautiful native poetry. It is the teaching of this school of Eridu, "the holy city," with its almost monotheistic worship of Ea and

his divine son, that exercised a most powerful influence on the future developments of the national religious life.

In tracing the growth and development of religious belief in Babylonia, we must remember that religious progress synchronizes with social progress. The weird creeds, animism, fetish worship, etc., with their liturgies of magic, belong to the family and early tribal stages. With the settlement in cities came the rise of the city god, the temple and the local school of theology. Ur became the centre of the worship of the moon-god. Erech became the centre of the cultus of Nana, Larsa and Sippara, the Northern and Southern Heliopoli; and Kutha or Tigabba the "city of the bowing down of the head," the great centre of eschatological teaching, and the worship of Nergal, the "great devourer," the god of death. One of the most ancient religious centres was that of Sergul, the city of the fire-god, contemporary with Eridu.

The local centres of religious life in Chaldea were most important features in the intellectual progress of the people; for each became the seat of a school of prophets and teachers, and much of the learning and wisdom, which in after time made Babylon the *Alma Mater* of Western Asia, was first elaborated in these local schools. There grew up, therefore, in Babylonia, as early as the twenty-fifth century before the Christian Era, a series of local educational centres. The local priests and doctors were most jealous of the teaching of their school, and the rights and privileges of their temple; and like the Brahmins in India, and the priests in Egypt, were by far the most influential caste in the land. The king often was by birth, and always by right of office, a *khattesi*, or "high priest," and as such head of the church and state. It is these local centres like the local polyarchies, that is one of the most characteristic features of Babylonian religious life, and which exercised a great power in its subsequent developments.

It would require more time than is at my disposal this afternoon to describe the nature and character of the teaching in these various temple colleges; two, however, deserve more than a mere passing notice. The first of these is the city of Ur, in which the Semites first make their appearance, a city of especial interest as being the birthplace and early home of Abram, the ancestor of the Hebrew people. The characteristic feature here was the worship of the Moon-god in his temple "of the great light," under the names of Aku, "the disk;" Nannar, "the bright one;" or Sin, "the bright." A name which is preserved in the names of Sinai and the wilderness of Sin.

The worship of the moon has always preceded that of the sun among nomad races, so here we see the Moon called the father

of the Sun-god, and represented as an aged man with bright horns and a crystal beard.

Father, longsuffering and full of forgiveness, whose hand upholds the life of all mankind :

Lord, Thy divinity fills the far-distant heaven and the widespread sea with reverence.

On the surface of the peopled earth, he bids sanctuaries be placed, and proclaims for (each) its name.

Father, creator of gods and men, who causes the shrine to be founded, who establishes his offering.

In Heaven who is supreme? Thou alone art supreme!

In Earth who is supreme? Thou alone art supreme!

As for thee, thy will is made known in heaven, and the angels bow down their faces.

As for thee, thy will is made known in earth, and the spirits kiss the ground.

As for thee, thy will is spread on high as the wind, the stall and the fold bring forth.

As for thee, thy will is declared on earth, and the green herb grows.

As for thee, thy will is made known in the resting-place, and the sheeppcote, and all living things increase.

As for thee, thy will has created law and justice, in that man by it has made a law.

As for thee, thy will is as the far-distant heaven and the innermost parts of the earth, no man hath known it.

As for thee, who can explain thy will; what can rival it?

These hymns exhibit considerable advance on the cruder thoughts of the older Turanian magic songs and litanies; and it must, to a large degree, be attributed to the influence of a purer and more poetic thought inspired by the desert life of the Semitic people. It is curious in these hymns, dating back certainly to the twenty-fifth century before the Christian era, to find phrases and expressions almost similar to those used by the Hebrew psalmists. The discovery of these fragments of the liturgy of the temple of the "great light," in which the ancestors of Terakh and Abram worshipped, is a very important one, for the monuments now show that the city of Kharran in North Mesopotamia, to which Abram emigrated, was a colony from Ur of the Chaldees, and its "temple of brightness" an adjunct of the mother-temple of Ur. Perhaps in these hymns and psalms we may trace the first inspirations of the songs of Zion.

The second centre of religious life to which I would call your attention is the dual city of Sippara, the Sepharvaim of the Old Testament (2 Kings xviii.), a city from which the Samaritan colonists were taken. It was one of the oldest cities of the Chaldean Empire, being by Berossus attributed to antediluvian ages—the city in which Xisuthrus, the Chaldean Noah, placed the records of pre-diluvian history. The explorations upon the site now marked by the mounds of Abbu Hubba prove it to be a city whose temple, dedicated to the sun-god, had grown old and

decayed, at as remote a period as B.C. 3800, and some archaic inscriptions from the site may be ascribed to an even more remote antiquity. Here there grew up a most powerful temple, with its schools, libraries, observatories; and supporting a vast number of priests, doctors, and scribes. The cultus located here was that of the worship of the bright sun-god under his name of Barbar or Samas, and the legends and myths of his wars and loves are most poetic, and valuable to the student of comparative mythology. According to the fragments which have been recovered from the library of this temple, the hymns are full of the most beautiful poetry. The sun, in a morning hymn, is described as opening the great gates of the rising sun and coming forth upon the world "like a wife pleased and giving pleasure," an expression which finds its equivalent in the Hebrew Psalms (xix. 5 *et seq.*): "The Sun which as a bridegroom cometh out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run his course." Spreading bright light, he looks upon all nations, and all nations turn their face to him; "his name is in all mouths;" "thou art a banner," a rallying point, "to all the wide earth." In another hymn we read of the beautiful, all-seeing eyes of the sun, "the judge of men." His strength, like that of Samson, is in his bright golden locks and beard, which represent his rays of light shorn and marred by the cold, cutting winter. He dies to rise again in all his youthful beauty. In the temple were his sacred chariot and horses, such as those of the Greek Apollo or the Syrian sun-god, which were destroyed by Josiah (2 Kings xxiii. 11). These are two of the chief centres of religious life which were in contact with the Hebrew people in pre-captivity times, and are therefore of more interest to us than some of the others, of which time does not permit me to speak.

In tracing the growth and development of religious life in Babylonia we must always maintain a synchronism with the social progress of the people, and thus we shall be able to establish a regular sequence in the progressive stages.

The age of polyarchy and the varied local schools of religious thought was terminated by the period when the various city kingdoms became amalgamated into one, and the empire was consolidated under the government of one powerful ruler. Such partial consolidations had taken place at various times, as, for example, in B.C. 3800, when Sargon I., of Agade or Akkad, became ruler of the land, or later, about B.C. 2500, when the kings of Ur, Urbahu and Dungi, had founded a united empire in South Babylonia.

But the grand and final consolidation took place about B.C. 2200, when a powerful prince, Kammurabi, proclaimed himself king of



Sumir and Akkad, namely, North and South Babylonia, and assumed the epithet of "builder of the land," namely, founder of the empire, and made Babylon his capital. Babylon had before this been but a second-rate city. It is true that dynasties from Dintir-Ki, or Babylon, had from time to time held sway, but it was not until this period that Babylon became the religious and secular capital of the empire. Its central position, its accessibility from all parts, made it an excellent site for the national capital, and, once established as such, it remained so for more than two thousand years.

With the establishment of Babylon as the national capital came the elevation of the local god of Babylon into the position of the national god.

A similar change followed the conversion of the old Canaanite fortress of Jebus into the Hebrew capital of Jerusalem. By the removal of the Ark, the Hebrew *palladium*, to the new capital, it formed a species of compact between Yaveh and the royal house, and Yaveh of Jerusalem became the national god. This change was only gradual, taking, as M. Renan remarks, nearly four centuries to reach its full development. In this centralization of religious as well as secular authority in one common centre lies the great secret of Babylonian national prosperity, and as long as the alliance was maintained the power of the empire was unbreakable.

The local god of Babylon was Marduk, or Merodach, but on his elevation to the position of national god he assumed many of the attributes of his father Ea, and also of Bel, "the lord of the world," and became known as Bel-Merodach, the Belus of the Greek writers. Khammurabi restored and beautified his great temple called by the name of E-Sagilla, "the house of the lofty head," and every monarch from this period until the days of Cyrus added his quota to its adornment and wealth. It became the metropolitan cathedral of Babylonia, the centre of all religious life throughout the vast empire. The dynasty of Khammurabi lasted over two centuries, and thus the work begun by the founder was cemented and made firm, and although there were numerous temples of far greater antiquity and of more impressive religious associations, yet for all time this edifice became the national temple of Babylonia, and one of the wonders of the world.

It was, however, during the important period of the Neo-Babylonian Empire, founded by Nabupalassar in B.C. 625, and his successors, that this great national religion was at the zenith of its glory.

This is the period upon which we are now getting a flood of light by the recent discoveries in Babylonia; is one of the most

important in the history of religious development in Western Asia; and one which throws an extremely important light upon the post-captivity aspect of Judaism. For it is upon this period, from B.C. 586 to B.C. 538, that the Jewish people were in the closest contact and relationship with their captors—a contact almost amounting to an absorption by their captors. Merodach now occupied almost the same position in regard to the affairs of Babylonia that Yaveh occupies in the writings of the later Jewish prophets. He is the national god. Babylon is “spoken of as his chosen field or land”—Babylon as his chosen city which he loves, while Bit Saggil is the abode which he loves. The enemies of the nation are his enemies. This is notably shown in case of the overthrow of the Medes. Prior to B.C. 549, the Medes, growing in power, had been a serious danger threatening the empire—as enemies of the empire they are also enemies of the national god. Thus, in the inscription: “Merodach, the great lord caused Cyrus, his little servant, to go up against Astyages, the king of the Barbarians; he overthrew him, his city Ecbatana he captured, and his spoil he carried away;” Cyrus is here spoken of as the little servant of the national god, because he is doing his work. Nabonidus himself is the greater servant. Here, then, Merodach occupies exactly the same position that is assigned to Cyrus by Yaveh in Isaiah xlv. 28, xlv. 1, where he is spoken of as “Cyrus, my prince.” Kings and princes do his work in destroying these foes, and he applies to these enemies the same epithet as the Hebrew god, “the unrighteous (*la magari*), who shall be utterly swept off the face of the earth.” He is a jealous god, and, as such, brooks no interference with his sovereignty. This is shown in the progress of events which led to the fall of the Babylonian Empire. Nabonidus, the last of the native Babylonian kings, who ascended the throne in B.C. 555, was a vacillating ruler, caring rather for pleasure, and especially apparently for antiquarian researches, than for the duties of state. In the valuable chronicle tablet we read the often-repeated phrase: “Bel came not forth;” denoting that the annual processions of the gods were not celebrated. In addition to this neglect of the worship of Merodach, the king, actuated perhaps by his antiquarian zeal, gathered together in the temple of Bel the statues of all the gods from the various great temples of the land. This, naturally, had a most serious effect on the priest caste. The priests of Bel-Merodach were offended, and *ergo* the god himself also, at being brought in contact with these local divinities; and the priests of the various local temples, many of them older than Babylon itself, were naturally incensed against the king, who deprived them of their local *palladia*. The action of the king, naturally produced a

religious revolution in the land, and a powerful opposition to the king.

The sole controlling element in the land was found in Belshazzar, the king's son, who seems to have been most punctilious in his religious duties, as well as an active and able soldier. But the gods, as represented by the priests, were against him, and his fate was certain. The Babylonians, like the Jews, were at this time looking to the same source for deliverance. Cyrus, the Persian, was hailed alike by Jew and Babylonian as the one who would restore the capital—and restore the national temple, and restore the national religion—and bring peace to each alike. There was a very rich and powerful Jewish element in the population, and it is very probable that they took the popular side in this national crisis. The great banking firm, who lent money to kings and princes, and farmed the Babylonian revenues of both temples and state are now admitted, by almost all Assyriologists, to be of Jewish origin. Their name, Egibi, or Ikibi, is the exact equivalent of the Hebrew Yakob, or Jacob. One strong argument that these people sided with the Babylonians in welcoming Cyrus as the deliverer is shown in the fact that their commercial transactions, of which we possess thousands of documents, are only interrupted for a few days by the events of the fall of Babylon. It is not, therefore, to be wondered, with these elements in his favour, that Cyrus entered city after city, and lastly Babylon itself, without fighting. It was on the evening of the 15th of the month Tammuz, the great festival of the marriage of Ishtar and Tammuz Adonis, in the year B.C. 538, that Babylon fell, Belshazzar was slain, and the empire fell.

“That night they slew him on his father's throne,  
The deed unnoticed, and the hand unknown ;  
Crownless and sceptreless Belshazzar lay,  
A robe of purple round a form of clay.”

Cyrus was hailed as a deliverer, a messiah. He freed the Babylonians from the eccentricity of an unpopular man, and afforded to the Jews the prospect of a deliverance. He is hailed by the national god as his servant, his viceroy, and the inscriptions from the temple of Merodach clearly reveal this. Thus is the Persian ruler spoken of: “Merodach, the great lord, restorer of his people, beheld with joy the deeds of his vice-regent, who was righteous in hand and heart. To his city of Babylon he summoned his march, like a friend and a comrade he went by his side; without fighting or battle he caused him to enter his city of Babylon. The lord god, who in his mercy raises the dead to life and who benefits all men in difficulty and prayer; has

in favour drawn to him and made mighty his name. Merodach, the great lord, freed the heart of his servant, whom the people of Babylon obey." These passages are sufficient to show Cyrus was welcomed by the Babylonians, and the short time in which he assumed and established here in his new empire proves the willingness of the people to submit to him. The policy of Cyrus in thus recognizing the religion of Babylon, and becoming a prayerful servant of Nebo and Merodach, would seem to directly contradict the statements of the Hebrew prophet Isaiah (ch. xlv. 1), where he is attributed with the most iconoclastic tenets, but it is only in perfect accordance with the subsequent action of Cambyses and Darius in Egypt, where the former conformed to the worship of Neit, and the latter to the adoration of Ammon, to whom he he built a temple in the oasis of El Kargeh.

It was remarked by the late Emanuel Deutsch how remarkable was the change wrought in the Hebrew people during the period of the captivity. They entered the land a people ever falling into idolatry, and falling from the service of the national god. In no way were they centralized, either in national or religious life, with no great national ambition, with only a law applicable to desert life, and no code suitable to civic life. Yet in the short period of about sixty years they return from their captivity a new people.

We can see, perhaps, some of the forces which produced this in the perfectly systematized social and religious codes of Babylonia with which they came so intimately associated. The national temple was the centre of all religious life, as the second temple became to the Jews. The great temple was fed by the local temples, which existed in all towns and villages and which corresponded to that important post-captivity institution, the Synagogue. The Babylonian festivals corresponded to the Hebrew great festivals almost day for day. In Nisan the feast of the spring or opening, which varied from the first to the eighth or fifteenth of Nisan according to the period of the equinox corresponded to the Passover. In Tisri there came the harvest feast, the feast of tabernacles; while the strange festival of darkness and weeping on the fifteenth of Adar, which preceded "the great day when the destinies of all men were forecast," bears a strange resemblance to the Jewish feast of Purim. The temple of the Babylonians was essentially the same in name and construction and arrangement as that of the Jews. The Hekal, the "holy place," literally the "palace," was separated as in the Jewish temple from the holy of holies, by a veil. This latter was called by the name of *parakku*, the "shut-off portion," a word cognate with the Hebrew *paroketh*, "the veil." Within it were the most

precious records of the people or city, similar to the Jewish ark, placed in stone cists, as in the temples at Ballawat and Sippara. Immediately above them was the throne of the god, covered by a species of *baldachino*, corresponding to the mercy seat, and supported by Kerubim or composite figures. Most of their institutions which distinguished them from the Gentile (*göim*) nations are to be found in Babylonia. The Sabbath, called by the Babylonians the white day, "or the day of the rest of the heart," was kept on the seventh, fourteenth, twenty-first, and twenty-eighth days with a strictness as great as that of the most Pharisaic Jews. No food was to be cooked, no fire to be lit, the clothes of the body might not be changed, it was even unlawful to wash. The king might not ride in his chariot or exercise any act of judgment or royalty. Sacrifice must not be offered until after sunset, when the Sabbath was over. One remarkable restriction was, that no medicine should be taken. "Medicine for the sickness of his body he shall not apply," which, no doubt, gave rise to the Pharisaic question to Jesus, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day?" In addition to this, even that distinctive ceremony which the Jews regarded as characteristic of their people, the rite of circumcision, we now know was a Chaldean custom long before Abram left his Chaldean home. With these remarkable resemblances it is not astonishing that in so short a time the Samaritan colonists from Babylonia became assimilated to Judaism. The laws which had been sufficient for the Hebrew people in the early nomadic stages of their life, in the first settlement in Palestine under the patriarchs and their wanderings in the desert, was totally inadequate for the new life of the city and town dweller. We now find the captivity producing that wonderful compendium of laws, entering into the minutest details of civic, domestic, and social life, the Talmud, and when we examine these laws, it is perfectly apparent that the whole is based upon the precedents of Babylonian laws.

The captivity was truly the *renaissance* of the Jewish people. Broken into divers factions, disintegrated in all their national affinities; with no common bond, no common aim, with a half-developed religion confined almost exclusively to the school of Jerusalem prophets. We find them returning from a short captivity of less than seventy years, a changed and new people. Zealous of the worship of the national god—impregnated with a national love and spirit, so deeply ingrained into their nature that the severest precautions to which any body of people has been subjected have failed to eradicate it from the hearts of even the poorest and the weakest. Entering Babylon with an incomplete law, they emerge with a religious and secular code

perfect in all its branches. With these facts before us we cannot too highly estimate the influence of Babylonia as a centre of religious development and influence.

In my lecture this afternoon, I have been able to deal with only one section in the vast mass of Babylonian literature—but certainly I believe the most important section. The material is ample, the work has been the result of the labour of a few patient students, but the time will come—is rapidly drawing near, when no student of the science of religion will feel his work complete without a careful study of these ancient tomes which for centuries have lain hidden in the treasure-houses of antiquity. From them we learn that not only was Babylon the motherland of culture and civilization, of arts, science, and letters, but also that in her temple schools were taught the first principles of many of the great doctrines of religion, which we hear at the present day set forth from our pulpits.

## CONFUCIUS THE SAGE AND THE RELIGION OF CHINA.

*BY PROFESSOR JAMES LEGGE.*

THE subject which I have undertaken to bring before you is, you perceive, twofold: Confucius the Sage and the Religion of China. I purposely worded it so. Two errors are frequently fallen into about Confucius. Some writers represent him as the author of what I may call the State religion of his country; while others contend that his teaching is merely a system of morality, without the element of religion. I have thought it would be well if I constructed my lecture this afternoon so as to correct both those errors, and give you, so far as the time will permit, some information as to who and what Confucius was, and what was the nature of that religion which was his by inheritance. We shall thus see how the two errors about him have arisen, be able to form an opinion as to the service which he did for China and the world, and also to pass a judgment as to the religious beliefs and practices which have obtained among the Chinese people from time immemorial.

First, then, let me speak to you of Confucius, giving you a brief sketch of his history, character, and teachings, without bringing in the subject of religion. I need hardly tell you that the name Confucius is merely the Latinized form of the three Chinese words K'ung Fû-tsze (孔夫子), meaning "The Master K'ung," equivalent in the mouths of his disciples to "Our Master K'ung," and accepted generally as the denomination of him as the most distinguished, or among the most distinguished, of all human teachers. He was emphatically a teacher. He was not a hero, whose history can be made interesting by a record of his military prowess, nor a man of science, who enlarged the boundaries of knowledge, and opened the way to new triumphs of man over nature. He was the sage, the man of calm and practical wisdom, inspired by the love of mankind, and inculcating the lessons of human duty.

His surname, as I have just intimated, was K'ung; and his birth took place in the year B.C. 551, in what was then the

feudal state of Lû, a portion of what is now the province of Shan-tung, on the eastern seaboard of China. But though he was born in Lû, his family had migrated thither from the duchy of Sung, in the present province of Ho-nan. The K'ung clan was a branch of the ducal house of Sung, which itself was descended from the kings of the dynasty of Shang, who had ruled from B.C. 1766 to 1123, and who traced their lineage back to Hwang Ti, the first year of whose reign is said to have been in B.C. 2697. There are tens of thousands of K'ungs now living, who boast of being descended from Confucius, and who have thus an ancestry going back into the mists of antiquity for more than four thousand five hundred years. Between the K'ungs and another more powerful clan of Sung there was a hereditary enmity; and the great-grandfather of our subject fled in consequence to the marquisate of Lû, and settled there. Confucius' father is known to us as sustaining an honourable position, and an officer of extraordinary strength and bravery. In his old age, for reasons into a detail of which I need not go, he divorced his wife, and contracted a second marriage with a young lady of the family of Yen, of whom Confucius was born in B.C. 551, as I have said.

The old father died soon afterwards, when the boy was in his third year; and his mother and he were left in straitened circumstances. The lad developed early the tendencies of his character. He has left us a very brief account of his mental growth, saying that at fifteen his mind was set on learning, and that at seventy he could do whatever his heart prompted, confident that it was right. When his mother died, in his twenty-third or twenty-fourth year, he raised the coffin in which, probably on account of her poverty, she had buried her husband near the place where they lived, and took it and her coffin to the place in which the K'ungs had first found refuge in Lû, and laid them there in the same grave. Before his mother's death he had married himself, and he appears to have lived with his wife happily enough for about fifty years. There is no sufficient evidence that he divorced her, as has been alleged, or ever introduced a concubine into his family. So far as his own practice is concerned, Confucius was a monogamist. His children were not many. He had one son, merely an ordinary, average man, but who left a son superior to himself, and to whom we are indebted for the most complete and philosophical account of his grandfather's teachings. Probably in his twenty-second year Confucius commenced his labours as a teacher in his native village. But he was not what we call a schoolmaster, teaching boys the rudiments of education. His house was the resort of young and inquiring spirits, whose attention he directed



to the ancient monuments of the nation's history and literature, unfolding to them at the same time the principles of human duty and of government. This was the work of his life. His disciples, first and last, amounted, it is said, to three thousand; and among them there were between seventy and eighty whom he highly valued, and praised as "scholars of extraordinary ability." From the time that he thus comes before us on the stage of public life, and especially during the long period of wandering among different states that subsequently befell him, he always appears attended by companies of his disciples. These must have supported him. In his earlier school he received all who came to him for instruction, and did not refuse the smallest fee; but he required from all an ardent desire for improvement and a good measure of capacity. It is difficult for us, however, to understand this feature of his course: how, while dependent on the sympathy and support of his followers, he yet maintained among them the most entire authority and independence. When Mencius, who is styled "a secondary Sage," came after him, about a century and a half later, and went about the country in the same way, enforcing the lessons of "the Master," he accepted the gifts of different princes to an extent that startled even his disciples. But Confucius never did so. He would not demean himself to receive help from a ruler whom he disapproved, and who would not carry out his principles in the government of his people. Confucius must have been supported by the free-will contributions of his disciples. This point in the study of his course has often suggested to me the passage in the Gospel of Luke where it says (chap. viii. 1-3) that Jesus "went about through cities and villages, preaching the good tidings of the kingdom of God, and with Him the twelve and certain women that had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary Magdalene and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered to them of their substance."

A noble by descent, and soon widely known for his attainments, Confucius might have expected to be called to a position in the government of the State. But the time was one of great corruption and disorder. The general government of the kingdom was feeble, and every feudal state was torn by contentions between its ruler and the Heads of the clans in it, as well as by collisions between those clans themselves. It was not till he was over fifty that Confucius was made governor of one of the towns of Lû. There his administration was so successful that he was soon raised to higher dignities, and at last became Minister of Crime for the whole State. "He strengthened," we are told,

"the ruling house, and weakened the usurping chiefs. A transforming government went abroad. Dishonesty and dissoluteness were ashamed, and hid their heads. Loyalty and good faith became the characteristics of the men, and chastity and docility those of the women. Confucius became the idol of the people, and flew in songs through their mouths. The people of other states flocked in crowds to Lû, to enjoy the blessing of its good order." But this sky of bright promise was soon overcast. The other states became jealous of the prosperity of Lû, and afraid of the influence of its Minister of Crime. The Marquis of Ch'i, the nearest of them, succeeded, by a most scandalous scheme, in alienating the mind of the ruler of Lû from his wise counsellor. Confucius became convinced that it was unbecoming his character to continue longer in the State. Slowly and sorrowfully he left it, and in B.C. 496 went forth, with a company of his disciples, to thirteen years of homeless wandering, trying to find a ruler who had ears to hear his instructions and goodness and wisdom to follow them. The quest was in vain, but the record of his experiences during that long and painful time is full of interest.

More than once he and the faithful few who would not leave him were in danger of perishing from want, or at the hands of excited mobs. On one occasion, when they were surrounded by an infuriate multitude and the disciples were alarmed, he calmly said to them, "Heaven produced the virtue that is in me. What can these people do to me?" This was always the way in which Confucius spoke in his highest utterances about himself. He never claimed to be anything more than man; but he felt that he had a divine mission. He knew the Way;—the way for the individual to perfect himself and the way for governors to rule so as to make their people happy and good. To teach this was his mission, and he would be faithful to it to the last. In the midst of his disciples, famishing and frightened, he was always calm, and cheered them, singing to his lute.

The wanderers occasionally came across recluses, men who had withdrawn from the world in disgust, and derided him, always striving, and striving in vain, with his plans of reformation. "Than follow one who withdraws from this ruler and that, had you not better follow those who withdraw from the world altogether?" said one of those recluses to a disciple. When his words were reported to the master, he said, "It is impossible to associate with birds and beasts. If I associate not with the people, with whom shall I associate? If the right way prevailed in the world, there would be no need for me to change its state."

At length Confucius was recalled to Lû in B.C. 483, but he was now in his sixty-ninth year. Only five years more remained

to him. He hardly re-entered public life, but devoted the time to completing his literary tasks. His son died in 482, but he bore that event with more equanimity than he did the death of his favourite disciple in the year following. His own death took place in the spring of 478. The account which we have of it is the following :—Early one morning he got up ; and with his hands behind him, and trailing his staff, he moved about by the door, crooning over—

“The great mountain must crumble,  
The strong beam must break,  
And the wise man wither away like a plant.”

After a little he entered the house, and sat down opposite the door. The disciple Tsze-kung, who was in attendance on him, had heard the words, and said to himself, “I am afraid the master is going to be ill.” With this he hastened into the house, when Confucius told him a dream which he had had in the night, and which he thought presaged his death, adding, “No intelligent monarch arises ; there is no ruler in the kingdom who will make me his master ; my time has come to die.” So it was. He took to his couch, and after seven days expired.

Such was the death of the great sage of China. His end was not unimpressive, but it was melancholy. He uttered no prayer, and he betrayed no apprehension. “The mountain falling came to nought, and the rock was removed out of its place. So death prevailed against him, and he passed. His countenance was changed, and he was sent away.”

I have thus given you a very condensed outline of the events of Confucius’ life. Of his personal appearance, his habits, and his sayings we have abundant details in the records of his disciples. He was tall, and methodical, doing everything in the proper way, time, and place. He was nice in his eating, but not a great eater. He was not a total abstainer from spirituous drink, but he never took too much. To confine myself to what they tell us of him as a teacher :—They found him free from foregone conclusions, arbitrary determinations, obstinacy, and egoism ; he would not talk with them about extraordinary things, feats of strength, rebellious disorder, and spiritual beings ; he frequently discoursed to them about the books of poetry and history and the rules of propriety ; there were three things, he said, in which the greatest caution was required : fasting (as preparatory to sacrifice), going to war, and the treatment of disease ; he insisted on their cultivating letters, ethics, leal-heartedness, and truthfulness ; and there were three things on which he seldom dwelt : the profitable, the decrees of Heaven, and perfect virtue.

He held that society was made up of five relationships : those of husband and wife, of parent and child, of elder and younger brother or generally of elders and youngers, of ruler and minister or subject, and of friend and friend. A country would be well governed when all the parties in those relationships performed their parts aright, though I must think that he allowed too much to the authority of the higher party in each of them. I do not mean to say that there was no such moral teaching in the literature of China before his time. There was much, but he invested it all with a new grace and dignity. His greatest achievement, however, in his moral teaching was his inculcation of the Golden Rule, which he delivered at least five separate times. Tsze-kung once asked him whether there were any one word which might serve as a rule of practice for all one's life. His reply was, "Is there not *shú*?" that is, *reciprocity*, or *altruism*; and he added the explanation of it: "What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others." The same disciple on another occasion saying that he observed the rule, Confucius simply remarked, "Ah! you have not attained to that!" He tells us, indeed, in one important passage—and we do not think the worse of him for the acknowledgment—that he was not able himself to follow the rule in its positive form in any one of the relationships.

Many of his short sayings are admirable in their pith and sagacity. What could be better than these?—

"Learning without thought is labour lost; thought without learning is perilous."

"It is only the truly virtuous who can love or hate others."

"Can there be love which does not lead to strictness in the training of its object? Can there be loyalty which does not lead to the instruction of its object?"

"To be poor without murmuring is difficult; to be rich without being proud is easy."

There was nothing he liked to set forth more than the character of his superior or ideal man. I will give you one specimen, and only one: "The scholar considers leal-heartedness and good faith to be his coat of mail and helmet, propriety and righteousness to be his shield and buckler; he walks along bearing over his head benevolence; he dwells holding righteousness in his arms before him; the government may be violently oppressive, but he does not change his course: such is the way in which he maintains himself."

It may occur to you that, notwithstanding all I have said, Confucius does not appear to you in any other character but as an ethical teacher of great merit; but I did not wish in this part of the lecture to exhibit him in any other. Wherein we must

attach to his teachings a religious sanction will be seen in the other part to which I will immediately proceed.

Certain failures in his character and writings, moreover, have been pointed out, and by no one so much as myself. He enunciated, for instance, as we have seen, the Golden Rule ; but he did not, or would not, appreciate the still higher rule, when his attention was called to it, that good should be returned for evil, and that the evil will thereby be overcome. While he taught truthfulness, moreover, there are many passages in the *Spring and Autumn* which he claimed especially as his own work, that awaken doubts as to its historical veracity. But, after all, these charges are not very heavy ; and he would have recked little of them himself. When he was once charged with slighting an important rule of propriety, all that he said in reply was, " I am fortunate. If I have any errors, people are sure to know them." You will not be sorry to hear the magnificent eulogium which his grandson pronounced on the ideal sage and king, being understood to have had Confucius in his mind :—

" Possessed of all sagely qualities, showing himself quick in apprehension, clear in discernment, of far-reaching intelligence and all-embracing knowledge, he was fitted to exercise rule ; magnanimous, generous, benign, and mild, fitted to exercise forbearance ; impulsive, energetic, firm, and enduring, fitted to maintain a strong hold ; self-adjusted, grave, never swerving from the mean, and correct, fitted to command reverence ; accomplished, distinctive, concentrative, and searching, fitted to exercise discrimination. Therefore his fame overspreads the Middle Kingdom and extends to all barbarous tribes. Wherever ships and carriages reach, wherever the strength of man penetrates, wherever the heaven overshadows and the earth sustains, wherever the sun and moon shine, wherever frosts and dews fall, all who have blood and breath unfeignedly honour and love him."

Secondly, let me pass on now to consider what is the nature of the religion of China, what it was in the very earliest times, and what it continues substantially to be at the present day. As we succeed in the study and exhibition of this, we shall discover more clearly the deep foundation of the moral teaching of Confucius, and wherein the religion itself fails to supply to the Chinese people all that is necessary for the nourishment of their spiritual being and the making of them what they ought to be.

There have been from time immemorial two sacrificial services in China : one addressed to the supreme Being and the other to the spirits of the dead. I call them *sacrificial* services in accordance with the general usage of writers on the subject ; but we must not import into the words *sacrifice* and *sacrificial* al

the ideas which we attach to them. The most common term for *sacrifice* in Chinese is *tsi* (祭), and the most general idea symbolized by it is an offering whereby communication and communion with spiritual beings are effected. The offerings, we are told, and the language employed in presenting them, were for the purpose of prayer, or of thanksgiving, or of deprecation. Our meaning of substitution and propitiation does not enter into the term, excepting in the sense of making propitious and friendly.

I will speak first of the former service.

The earliest name for the supreme Being among the Chinese fathers appears to have been *T'ien*, or "Heaven." When the framers of their characters made one to denote "Heaven" (天), they fashioned it from two already existing characters, representing "one" (一) and "great" (大), signifying the vast and bright firmament, overspreading and embracing all, and from which came the light, heat, and rain which rendered the earth beneath fruitful and available for the support and dwelling of man and all other living beings on its surface. But their minds did not rest in the material, or I might almost say the immaterial, sky. The name soon became symbolical to them of a Power and Ruler, a spiritual Being, whom they denominated *Ti* (帝), "God," and *Shang Ti* (上帝), "the supreme God." I cannot render these terms in English in any other way. The Chinese dictionaries tell us that *Ti* represents the ideas of lordship and rule.

So it was that the name for the *sky* which they beheld became to the earliest Chinese personal as the denomination of their concept of God. The same process of thought must have taken place among our own Early Fathers, though the personal name has displaced the material and symbolical term among us much more than it has among the Chinese. The name *Heaven* for *God*, however, has not altogether disappeared from our common speech. Witness such phrases as "Heaven knows," "Please Heaven." I find the same significance in the words of Daniel to the Babylonian Nebuchadnezzar, "Thou shalt know that the heavens do rule," and in the penitent language of the returning prodigal, "Father, I have sinned against Heaven and in thy sight."

The worship of God was associated with a worship of the more prominent objects of nature, such as heaven and earth, the sun and moon, the starry host, hills and streams, forests and valleys. It has been contended from this that the most ancient religion of the Chinese was a worship of the objects of nature. I do not think

it was so, and I am supported in my opinion by the express testimony of Confucius that "by the ceremonies of the sacrifices to heaven and earth they served God." The words supply an instance of his unfrequent use of the personal name, which he employed, I suppose, to give greater emphasis to his declaration. If it was so in the worship of those greatest objects of nature, much more must it have been so in that of the inferior objects. Even though the presidency of those objects may be ignorantly and superstitiously assigned to different spiritual beings, the prayers to them show that the worship of them is still a service of God. In a prayer, for instance, to the Cloud-master, the Rain-master, the Lord of the Winds, and the Thunder-master, it is said, "It is yours, O spirits, to superintend the clouds and the rain, and to raise and send abroad the winds, as ministers assisting the supreme God." To the spirits of all the hills and rivers under the sky, again, it is said, "It is yours, O Spirits, with your Heaven-conferred powers and nurturing influences, each to preside over one district, as ministers assisting the Great Worker and Transformer."

Thus then I may affirm that the religion of China was, and is, a monotheism, disfigured indeed by ignorance and superstition, but still a monotheism, based on the belief in one supreme Being, of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things.

Very soon that religion became a state-worship, and in doing so it took a peculiar form. The only performer allowed in it is "the One Man," the sovereign of the nation himself. Its celebration, moreover, is limited to a few occasions, the greatest being that at the winter solstice. Then the service is, or ought to be, an acknowledgment by the Emperor, for himself, his line, and the people, of their obligations to God. It is said of this ceremony that it is "the utmost expression of reverence" and "the greatest act of thanksgiving." It may have degenerated into a mere formality, but there is the original idea underlying it. It grew probably from the earliest patriarchal worship, though there is no record of that in Chinese literature. The sovereign stands forth in it, both the father and priest of his people. I do not term him the *high*-priest, for there is no other priest in all the empire. No one is allowed in the same direct manner to sacrifice to God. There never has been in China a priestly class or caste, and I cannot consider this a disadvantage. The restriction of the direct, solemn worship of God has been unfortunate, excluding the people generally from communion with Him,—the highest privilege of man and the most conducive to the beauty and excellence of his whole character; but better this even than a priestly class, claiming to stand between men and God, them-

selves not better than other men, and in no respect more highly gifted, and yet shutting up the way into the holiest that is open to all, and assuming to be able by rites and performances of theirs to dispense blessings which can only be obtained from the great God with whom all have to do.

Only on one other point in this part of my lecture will I touch : the relation between men and God as their Governor and the connection between the religion and morality. King T'ang, the founder of the Shang dynasty in B.C. 1766, thus spoke :—"The great God has conferred even on the inferior people a moral sense, compliance with which would show their nature invariably right. To make them tranquilly pursue the course which it would indicate is the work of the sovereign." Much to the same effect spoke Wû, the first king of the Chên dynasty, in 1122 :—"He even, to help the inferior people, made for them rulers, and made for them instructors, who should be assisting to God, so as to secure tranquillity throughout the nation." Thus government is from God and teaching is from God. They are both divine ordinances. The king and the sage are equally God's ministers, having their respective functions ; and they have no other divine right to their positions but that which arises from the fulfilment of their duties. The dynasty that does not rule so as to secure the well-being of the people has forfeited its right to the throne. An old poet, celebrating the rise of the dynasty of which he was a scion, thus sang :—

"Oh ! great is God ; His glance on earth He bent,  
Scanning our regions with severe intent  
For one whose rule the people should content.  
The earlier lines of kings had practised ill,  
And ruling, ruled not after God's just will ;  
He therefore 'mong the states was searching still."

So it was with the sovereign ; and as for the teacher, if he did not set forth aright the will of God, he had no function at all.

See the application of all this to the case of Confucius and the religious character which it imparts to his moral teachings. The treatise of his grandson, to which I have already alluded, commences with this sentence :—"What Heaven has conferred" (on man) "is called his NATURE ; an accordance with this nature is called the PATH" (of DUTY) ; "the regulation of this path is called the SYSTEM OF INSTRUCTION." Now who ever sought to regulate the path of duty by his instructions as our sage did ? In doing so, he taught man indeed to act in accordance with his nature ; but accordance with that nature was the fulfilment of the will of Heaven. The idea of Heaven or God as man's Maker and Governor was fundamental to the teachings of Confucius, and



on this account I contend that those who see in him only a moral teacher do not understand him. What he said was with a divine sanction; and they who neglected and disobeyed his lessons were—as he said, “offending against Heaven, and had none to whom they could pray.”

And further the account which I have given of the state religion supplies probably the true reason why Confucius generally spoke of Heaven, and seldom used the personal name *God*. We ought to find the expressions of a devout reverence and submission in such utterances as the following:—“Alas! there is no one that knows me. But I do not murmur against Heaven, nor grumble against men. There is Heaven; that knows me.”

But I hasten on to speak, next and finally, of that other worship—if we should call it so—the sacrifices to ancestors and to others not of the same line as their worshippers.

How this worship took its rise I am unable to say. Herbert Spencer holds that “the rudimentary form of all religion is the propitiation of dead ancestors who are supposed to be still existing, and to be capable of working good or evil to their descendants.” This view is open to the criticism which I made on the Confucian sacrifices generally: that our idea of propitiation is not in them. It is not found either in those to the supreme Being or in those to the dead.

Of course sacrificing to the dead involves a belief in the continued existence of the souls or spirits of men after their life on earth has come to a close, and also that they continue in the possession of their higher faculties, so as to be conscious of the services rendered to them, and to be able to exercise an influence on the condition of their descendants and others in the world.

Sacrificing to the departed great, who were not of the same line as their worshippers, admits of an easy explanation. It is a grateful recognition of the services which they rendered to their own times and for all time. In the *Record of Ritual Usages* we read, “According to the Institutes of the Sage Kings, sacrifices should be offered to him who had given laws to the people, to him who had persevered to the death in the discharge of his duties, to him who had strengthened the State by his laborious toil, to him who had boldly and successfully met great calamities, and to him who had warded off great evils. Only men of this character were admitted to the sacrificial canon.” Such a sacrificial service has little that is objectionable in it. It is little more than the tribute which a historian pays to the virtues of those whom he commemorates in his writings, and in which his readers cordially join. Nor does this worship

interfere with the monotheism of the Chinese religion. The men are not deified. I will give you an instance in point from a hymn which was employed in sacrificing to a very ancient worthy styled Hâu-chi, who was honoured as the father of agriculture. It says,—

“ O thou accomplished, great Hâu-chí.  
 To whom alone 'twas given  
 To be by what we owe to thee  
 The correlate of Heaven,  
 On all who dwell within our land  
 Grain food didst thou bestow ;  
 'Tis to thy wonder-working hand  
 This gracious boon we owe.  
 God had the wheat and barley meant”  
 To nourish all mankind ;  
 None would have fathomed His intent  
 But for thy guiding mind.”

Confucius has a distinguished place in this sacrificial service, and I used to think that he received in it religious worship, and denounced it. But I was wrong. What he received was the homage of gratitude, and not the worship of adoration. There is a danger of this worship being productive of evil and leading to superstition and idolatry. The most remarkable instance of this that occurs to me is the exaltation for the last three centuries of Kwan Yü, an upright, likable warrior of our third century, to be really, so far as the title is concerned, “ the god Kwan,”—the god of war.

But I return to the worship of ancestors. That is insisted on in the Confucian teaching as the consummating tribute of filial piety, the virtue which occupies the first place in the scale of human excellences. A great virtue it is undoubtedly, but it is exaggerated by the Chinese ; and the exaggeration has been on the whole perhaps injurious to the prosperity and progress of the nation.

Certain sayings of Confucius have often been pointed out as showing that he was not satisfied in his own mind as to the continued existence of the dead, or that their spirits really had knowledge of the sacrificial services rendered to them ; but I will not enter now on a discussion of them. We are not certain how we should understand them, and he was himself strict in the performance of the services. “ He sacrificed to the dead,” we are told, “ as if they were present, and to the spirits as if they were there.” If he were prevented from being present at such a service, and had to employ another to take his place, he considered his absence to be equivalent to his not sacrificing.

At the sacrifice small tablets of wood with the names of the deceased to whom they were dedicated written on them were set

up, and called the spirit-tablets, which the spirits were supposed to take possession of for the time. They were ordinarily in an apartment behind the sacrificial hall, and brought out for the occasion. They were returned to their place when the service was over, and the spirits were supposed to have left the temple for their place. But where was their place? Where and in what condition do the spirits of the departed exist?

For one thing, they are believed to be in heaven, and in the presence of God. A very famous name in China was that of king Wăn, whose career led to his son's becoming the first sovereign of the Châu dynasty; and of him after his death it was sung,—

“The royal Wăn now rests on high,  
In dignity above the sky;  
Châu as a state had long been known;  
Heaven's choice of it at last was shown.  
Its lords had gained a famous name;  
God kinged them when the season came.  
King Wăn ruled well when earth he trod;  
Now moves his spirit near to God”

In the same way the emperors of the present Man-chû line speak of their departed fathers. The concluding hymn for the worship of them in the ancestral temple in the canon of 1826 may be thus rendered :—

“Now ye confront, now ye pass by,  
Unbound by conditions of place;  
Here ye descend, there ye ascend,  
Nor leave of your movements a trace.  
Still and deep is the chamber behind;  
How restful and blessed its space!  
Their home have your spirits in heaven,  
The shrines there their tablets embrace.  
A myriad years their course shall run,  
Nor e'er our filial thoughts efface.”

For another thing, the spirits of the departed become tutelary guardians of their posterity, dispensing blessings on them if they pursue the course of well-doing and punishing them if they do wrong, subject, however, in both cases to the will of God.

Time will not permit me to adduce instances in confirmation of this statement, which could easily be done from the records of Chinese history. They are all cases, however, of good sovereigns and men, who, because of their virtuous course on earth, attained at death to heaven and the presence of God, and had the charge there of watching over the interests that had occupied them and been dear to them in life. But what does the Confucian religion of China teach concerning the future state of bad sovereigns and bad men generally? I may almost reply to this question, “Absolutely nothing.” Its oracles are dumb on this interesting

and important point. There is no purgatory and no hell in the Confucian literature.

There had grown up even before the time of the Sage a doctrine that the retribution of good and evil takes place in time, and he himself derived no little benefit in his own career from it. The distinction between good and evil is never obscured, nor the different issues of the one and the other. Every moralist writes as if he had been charged, like Isaiah, to "say of the righteous that it shall be well with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him, and of the wicked, Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him." Similar proclamations resound all along the line of Chinese history; but the good to the righteous, and the ill to the wicked, are only the prosperity of the one class and the overthrow and ruin of the other in their worldly estate. The retribution of both cases takes place, not in the persons of the good or the bad, but in those of their descendants. I have said that this view of providence had arisen in China before the time of Confucius. There is a distinct enunciation of it in one of the appendixes to the *Yi-King*, the authorship of which is generally, though not, I think, correctly, ascribed to the Sage himself. It is said, "The family that accumulates goodness is sure to have superabundant happiness; the family that accumulates evil is sure to have superabundant misery." The same teaching appears in the second commandment of our Decalogue. An important and wholesome truth it is that the good-doing and ill-doing of parents are visited on and in their children; but do the sinning parents themselves escape the curse? It is in this form that the subject of future retribution appears among the literati of China, the professed followers of Confucius, at the present day. They do not deny the continued existence of the spirit after death, and they present their sacrifices or offerings to their ancestors, but it is with little or no consideration of whether their lives were good or bad. Those offerings have become unmeaning forms.

One of the most interesting ceremonies conducted at the capital of China is that in which the emperors perform a sacrificial service twice a year to the spirits of the emperors of all the dynasties before their own. In the canon of 1826, the sovereigns sacrificed to, from Fu-hsi in the thirty-fourth century before Christ down to the close of the Ming dynasty in 1643, amount to a hundred and eighty-eight. These are not nearly all the sovereigns that have reigned during the long period of five thousand years or thereabouts. What names are admitted and what are rejected depends on the reigning emperor and on the members of the Board of Rites. *Shih Hwang Ti* of Ch'in, the great enemy of

Confucianism, does not appear, nor sovereigns who proved the ruin of their dynasties. Success seems to be the chief consideration ensuring a place. The second and greatest of the reigning line laid it down as a rule for his canon-makers that the character of the sovereigns whom they admitted was not to be too critically examined.

Thus the entire silence of the religion of China with regard to the future of the bad is an unsatisfactory feature in it. The only evil issue of an evil course which it intimates, and that not very distinctly, is to be excluded from sharing in the sacrifices to the dead, the force of which as a motive to virtuous conduct I am unable to appreciate.

I have done, having fulfilled the task which I undertook as well as I am able at present to attain to. I think you will judge of Confucius pretty much as I do. His appearance well deserves to be commemorated as an era in the history of his nation; and whatever there is of good and strength in it is mainly due to him. That there is no little of both may safely be inferred from the long continuance of its national history and the growth of its population. It is what it is, politically, socially, and morally, through the teachings of its Sage. It would have been better if those had been allowed to have the sole occupancy of it. But Taoism before Confucius and since, and Buddhism since our first century, have been sowing their tares in it. I say so with deference to those who think more highly of those systems than I am able to do. And now in this later time our religion, our commerce, our science and arts, our manners and customs, have all found their way to the empire. Will it be to improve and regenerate it, or to weaken and ruin it? The former will be the case if we act to it according to the golden rule of Confucius, and do to the Chinese as we would have them do to us, and according to the still loftier maxim of Láo-tsze, and overcome their evil by our good. I look forward to the future of China with considerable anxiety, but with more of hope.

## TAOISM.

*BY FREDERIC H. BALFOUR.*

It is, as you are no doubt aware, a commonplace of our school geographies that in China there are Three Religions; or, to speak more accurately, Three Doctrines. In fact, I do not think it can be said that China has ever produced a genuine Religion, in the strictest sense of the term; unless, indeed, we admit as an historical fact that primitive Monotheism associated with the prehistoric and semi-mythical Emperors who are said to have flourished between one and two thousand years before the birth of Confucius. Of that eminent man, and the system of which he was the founder, you heard last Sunday from the mouth of the greatest living exponent, among Europeans, of Confucianism. It is not, of course, either my intention or my province to trench upon another man's domain; but it is necessary for my present contention to record the opinion which, erroneous or well-founded, I very strongly hold, that Confucianism is less a religion than a code of social and political morality. Buddhism, on the other hand, is a religion, in a very important sense; but then it is a foreign importation, like Mohammedanism or Christianity, and has become imbued with no more than a local colouring from its prolonged establishment in China. Taoism, with which we have to deal to-day, bears, it is true, many of the outward and visible signs of a religious system; but this is a mark of degradation, and is due in a very large measure to the contaminating influences of its contact with those grosser developments of popular Buddhism which flourish so rankly among the lower classes of Chinese. At present Taoism is a base and abject superstition, a religion in the worst and lowest sense, a foolish idolatry supported by an ignorant and venal priesthood commanding the respect of no single class in the community; a system of unreasoning credulity on the one hand, and of hocus-pocus and imposture on the other. This is not the Taoism of which I am going to speak to you to-day. It has its students among European scholars, but I confess that the subject has little or no

interest for me. What I am going to tell you of is not Taoism the degenerate and idolatrous mythology which exists at present, but Taoism the pure and lofty philosophy which arose two thousand years ago, when a wave of inspiration seems to have swept over the entire civilized world, bringing with it that restlessness and vague though earnest expectation of something better yet to come, some epoch-making discovery or revelation of which the previous agitation was a harbinger, that is ever present in periods marked by great intellectual upheavals, and when schools of learning were in process of establishment under Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, destined to exert an influence upon the world, not for that age merely, but for all time. The great movement which took place in Europe five hundred years before Christ was accompanied by a corresponding movement, almost as great, almost as far-reaching, in a country whose very existence was a dream to the scholars of Greece and Rome; and foremost in time, if not in speculative and metaphysical power, among the leaders of thought in China, was the Old Philosopher who, wearying of official cares, devoted the best portion of his life to the study of abstract ideas, and became the acknowledged founder of Taoism, or the Doctrine of the Tao.

Now, in order to find out what Taoism really is, we must devote our attention to the word, or character, "Tao" itself. This is composed of two parts, meaning respectively "head" and "to go." I do not think that this analysis will help us very far. As regards its meaning, we find that it is susceptible of several translations, according to the context and the sense in which the word is used. Primarily it means a Road or Way. It is also employed in composition as the verb "to speak." Thirdly, it signifies Principle, or Doctrine. The trifling fact that it is susceptible of at least half-a-dozen other meanings, none of which are cognate to the present inquiry, need not delay us here. It is used in the Classics in the sense of the Right Path in which one ought to go, while many European scholars have boldly translated it Reason, thereby identifying it with the Platonic Logos. What is the truth about the matter, and how shall we be best able to find it out?

Well, the position we take up is a very simple one. To put it algebraically, Tao is the  $x$ , or unknown quantity, that we have to find. And the first thing to be done is to see what is predicated of this mysterious Thing; how it is described; with what attributes it is credited; where it is to be found; whence it sprang, how it exists, and what its functions are. Then we may find ourselves in a position to discover what it is that answers to these particulars, and profanely to give a name to

that which its preachers themselves declared must be for ever nameless.

We are told that it has existed from all eternity. Chuang-tzū, the ablest writer of the Taoist school, says that there never was a time when it was not. Lao-tzū, the reputed founder of Taoism, affirms that the image of it existed before God Himself. It is all pervasive; there is no place where it is not found. It fills the Universe with its grandeur and sublimity; yet it is so subtle that it exists in all its plenitude in the tip of a thread of gossamer. It causes the sun and moon to revolve in their appointed orbits, and gives life to the most microscopic insect. Formless, it is the source of every form we see; inaudible, it is the source of every sound we hear; invisible, it is that which lies behind every external object in the world; inactive, it yet produces, sustains, and vivifies every phenomenon which exists in all the spheres of being. It is impartial, impersonal, and passionless; working out its ends with the remorselessness of Fate, yet abounding in beneficence to all. "What is Tao?" asks Huai-nan-tzū, another eminent writer on the Taoist philosophy. "It is that which supports heaven and covers earth; it has no boundaries, no limits; its heights cannot be measured, nor its depths fathomed; it enfolds the entire universe in its embrace, and confers visibility upon that which of itself is formless. . . . It is so tenuous and subtle that it pervades everything just as water pervades mire. It is by Tao that mountains are high and abysses deep; that beasts walk and birds fly; that the sun and moon are bright, and the stars revolve in their courses. . . . When the spring winds blow, the sweet rain falls, and all things live and grow. The feathered ones brood and hatch, the furry ones breed and bear; plants and trees put forth all their glorious exuberance of foliage, birds lay eggs, and animals produce their young; no action is visible outwardly, and yet the work is completed. Shadowy and indistinct, it has no form. Indistinct and shadowy, its resources have no end. Hidden and obscure, it reinforces all things out of formlessness. Penetrating and permeating everything, it never acts in vain."

Such are a few of the attributes ascribed to the nameless Principle we are considering. What ideas do they suggest to our mind? Such, I believe, as can scarcely be expressed in any single word. Lao-tzū and his followers recognized the fact that for this mysterious entity there can be no name, and so, as Lao-tzū himself says, they were forced to speak of it simply as Tao. We in the West have practically arrived at the same conclusion. What is it that makes flowers grow up and water flow down, which causes the showers to fall and the sun to shine,



which guides the stars in their flaming courses, regulates the seasons, endows the butterfly with its radiant hues, makes heat expand and cold contract, gives one man black hair and another red, and, in a word, is the cause of every phenomenon around us, the mainspring of the huge machine of which we form a part? We, too, have failed to find a name for it, and so we call it *Nature*. Translate Tao, as used in this sense, by our common word Nature—or, if you prefer it, Principle, Course, or Way of Nature—and I think we shall have discovered the key to Taoism; using the word, of course, not as applied poetically to the visible Universe, the *natura naturata*, but in the sense of *natura naturans*, the abstract Cause, the initial Principle of life and order, the hypostatic quiddity which underlies all phenomena, and of which they are a manifestation only.

Tao, then, is Nature; Taoism is the philosophy of Nature; and Taoists are in the fullest sense of the word Naturalistic philosophers. Let us proceed now to consider the developments and adaptations of the great Naturalistic theory, in its relation to speculative cosmogony, in the first place, and afterwards to the more practical details of social and political life.

The Taoists have a good deal to tell us about the Evolution of the visible Universe. "There was a time," says Chuang-tzū, "when all things had a beginning. The time when there was yet no beginning had a beginning itself. There was a beginning to the time when the time that had no beginning had not begun. There is existence, and there is also non-existence. In the time which had no beginning there existed Nothing—or a Vacuum. When the time which had no beginning had not yet begun, then there also existed Nothing. Suddenly, there was Nothing; but it cannot be known, respecting existence and non-existence, what was certainly existing and what was not."

Now I dare say that that sounds to you so much empty nonsense. But I will ask you to compare it with the following utterance of no less a writer than the late lamented Mr. Proctor, who traverses the same ground as this old Chinese philosopher of two thousand years ago, though he speaks in rather clearer language:—

"Those," he says, "who can, may find relief in believing in absolutely void space and absolutely unoccupied time before some very remote but not infinitely remote epoch, which may in such belief be called the beginning of all things; but the void time before *that* beginning can have had no beginning, unless it were preceded by time not unoccupied by events, which is inconsistent with the supposition. We find no absolute beginning if we look backwards."

In the first chapter of the works of Lieh-tzū, another very prominent writer of this school, we find a more definite speculation about the origin of life and motion, conveyed in very striking terms :—

“ There is a Life that is uncreated :  
 There is a Transformer who is changeless.  
 The Uncreated alone can produce life ;  
 The Changeless alone can evolve change.  
 That Life cannot but produce ;  
 That Transformer cannot but transform.  
 Wherefore creations and transformations are perpetual,  
 And these perpetual creations and transformations continue through  
 all time.  
 They are seen, in the Male and Female Principles of Nature  
 They are displayed in the Four Seasons.  
 The Uncreated stands, as it were, alone ;  
 The Changeless comes and goes ;  
 His duration can have no end,  
 Peerless and One—His ways are past finding out.”

In the same book we have a very interesting discussion, between an Emperor and his Minister, about the extent and eternity of matter. The Emperor begins by asking whether matter existed from the beginning of all things ; and the Minister replies by asking how, if it did not, it came to exist at present, and whether their descendants would be justified in denying that matter existed in his Majesty's own day. The Emperor naturally enough rejoins that, by this argument, matter must have existed from all eternity—a remark that his Minister parries by saying that no records remain of the time before matter existed, and that all such knowledge is beyond the scope of humanity. To the question of the Emperor whether there is any limit to the expanse of the Universe, the Minister replies by avowing his entire ignorance ; and when the Emperor presses the matter home by urging that “ where nothing exists that is the Infinite, but where there is existence there must be finality,” the Minister says plainly that nobody knows anything about the Infinite. But we know this much : Heaven and Earth are simply contained in the great whole of the infinite Universe ; and how can we tell whether there may not be an Unseen Universe, above and beyond that smaller Cosmos that is within the range of our perception ?

At this point it may be useful to deal very briefly with a question which has, no doubt, occurred to many of you already, namely, Does the Taoist system include a Personal Creator and Moral Governor of the Universe ? Well, the question is one more easily asked than answered. It is true that there are frequent references in the Taoist Classics to some Being, Influence, or Power, who is spoken of as the Creator. There are also passages, here and there, in which the word “Ti,” or God, occurs. But such

allusions are very obscure, very vague, very indefinite; while the term which is generally used for the verb "to create" implies less creation, as we understand it, than transformation or metamorphosis. Nor is there, as far as my own researches teach me, any definite statement as to the relations existing between this very shadowy Creator and the Tao. Some persons have hazarded the theory that Tao and the Taoist Creator are identical; that the Tao, in point of fact, is God. But this will not hold water. Tao is impersonal and passionless, and in one sentence of what we may call the Taoist Bible is spoken of in direct antithesis to God. Then, again, the workings of Tao explain everything, so that there is neither the room nor the necessity for a Personal Creator. In fact, the Taoist theory of Creation appears to me to foreshadow in a very remarkable manner the latest conclusions arrived at by scientific men in the present day. The nebulous haze which Professor Tyndall regards as the source of all material things, had a place in the philosophy of the ancient Taoists, who spoke of the primordial aura that eventually underwent condensation and concretion, and finally emerged in the form of solid matter, with definite and various shapes. Evolution lay at the root of Taoist cosmical science, and we find passages in Haeckel's *History of Creation* which might have been written, word for word, by any of the Taoist authors, passages which I would read to you did the time at my disposal permit. The Taoist theory, however, cannot be more ably or concisely summed up than in the words of Lucretius: "Nature is seen to do everything of herself spontaneously, without the meddling of the gods."

Now according to the Taoist theory, man is to be regarded as simply a part of the Universe, an offshoot of creation, a manifestation, like everything else, of the universal and inherent Tao. And this, be it remarked, is not a scientific or speculative opinion merely. It is a powerful moral factor, inducing a resignation to destiny and a submission to the laws of Nature which deserve our respectful attention. Listen, for instance, to the following utterances on the subject of Death. To the Taoist, Death was no King of Terrors, but rather an inevitable and welcome change, a turn in the wheel of the Universe, an event as natural as the fading of an autumn leaf or the succession of the Four Seasons. "Poverty," says Lieh-tzŭ, "is the common lot of scholars, and death is the end of us all. What cause for sorrow is there, then, in quietly fulfilling one's destiny and awaiting the close of life?" "Death," he says, in another place, "is to life as going away is to coming. How can we know that to die here is not to be born elsewhere? How can we tell whether, in their eager rush for life, men are not under a delusion? How can I tell whether, if I die

to-day, my lot may not prove far preferable to what it was when I was originally born?" "Ah! men know the dreadfulness of death; but they do not know its rest." "How excellent is it, that from all antiquity Death has been the common lot of men! It is repose for the good man, and a hiding-away of the bad. Death is just a going home again. The dead are those who have gone home, while we, who are living, are still wanderers."

So far, I think you will agree with me that the teachings of Taoism are not devoid of much spiritual force and beauty. What, however, do they mainly inculcate in practical, everyday life? Spontaneity, simplicity, purity, gentleness, and, in a word, goodness.

Let me explain what I mean by spontaneity. The original constitution of every man being the direct gift of Nature—or rather, an actual part of Nature itself—it follows that it should be jealously preserved intact, in all its pristine purity. This is the grand and primary object of the true Taoist—the preservation of his Heaven-implemented Nature. And how is this to be accomplished? By imitating the great Mother. Nature is spontaneous in all her works; therefore the Sage should be spontaneous too, not acting from design, but following the natural promptings of his heart in accord with his surroundings. Nature never strives; therefore the Sage should guard against striving too. Nature is ever passive; therefore the Sage should let things take their course, and be content with following in their wake. Ambition, scheming, passion, desire—any attention to external objects of whatever kind—are all so much disordering, or spoliation, of the original nature of man, and as such should be utterly discarded. Even the active cultivation of virtues, such as benevolence, rectitude, and propriety, is condemned; Nature requires no effort to stimulate her growth, and all the Sage has to do is to bring himself into perfect conformity with her. All such passions, accomplishments, and attributes, being phases of disturbance or strife, are called, in Taoist phrase, the Human nature of man, in contradistinction to that Heavenly or Inherent nature with which he is endowed. "Wherefore," says Chuang-tzū, "do not develop this artificial, human, or engrafted nature; but *do* develop that Inherent or Natural nature which is the inheritance of you all." Huai-nan-tzū, to whom I have already referred, brings out this point with admirable lucidity. "What is it," he asks, "that we mean when we talk about the Natural or Inherent? It is that which is homogeneous, pure, simple, undefiled, ungarnished, upright, luminous, and immaculate, and which has never undergone any mixture or adulteration from the beginning. And what is the Human or Artificial? It is that which has been

adulterated with shrewdness, crookedness, dexterity, hypocrisy, and deceit ; which bends itself into compliance with the world, and defers to the customs of the age. For instance : the ox has horns and a divided hoof, while the horse has a dishevelled mane and a complete hoof ; this is the Heavenly, or Natural. But if you put a bit into the horse's mouth, and pierce the nose of the ox, this is the Human, or artificial." In other words, all attempts to improve upon, or interfere with, things as they are in their natural state, are violations of Nature, and to be condemned accordingly. Nor is this theory difficult of application to many institutions in our own day. We may be sure that if any of these old Taoists were to appear among us now, they would tell us boldly, "If Nature has given you black hair, don't try to dye it yellow ; if you have a sallow or a pale complexion, don't daub it with pink paint ; if your waist measures five-and-twenty inches round, don't try and squeeze it into eighteen. All such attempts are violations of Nature, and are sure to bring their own punishment along with them."

But to bring himself into conformity with Nature, it is imperative that the Sage should be always and completely passive. This is expressed by a Chinese formula which may be variously rendered "not-doing," "non-exertion," "inertia," "absolute inaction," or, perhaps best of all, "masterly inactivity." In addition to the idea of undisturbed quiescence it embraces also that of spontaneity and designlessness ; so that even the rigid adherence to an inactive policy is robbed of its virtue if it be adopted with intent. The very effort to obtain possession of Nature, says Chuang-tzū, defeats itself, and for the simple reason that it is an effort. A man must be passionless as well as motionless ; he must be content to leave himself to the influences which surround him, and discard all idea of helping on the work ; he must banish all desire from his heart ; he must concert no schemes and form no plans ; he must never anticipate emergencies, but simply mould himself according to any circumstances that may arise. And especially is this of importance in the world of politics. Here the formula I have referred to must be rendered "non-interference," that wise and far-sighted policy the world is so slow to learn. The Taoist condemns over-legislation, and justly points to the peddling, meddling system of a so-called paternal government as the cause of anarchy and ruin. Leave the people alone, is the wise maxim of Taoism ; don't harass them with perpetual interference, and vexatious efforts at protection. Let things take their course and find their level ; let the people develop their resources in a natural and spontaneous way. Charles Kingsley and Herbert Spencer are here anticipated by a

couple of thousand years. Never do anything, says the Taoist politician, for the mere sake of doing it ; never do anything that is not absolutely necessary ; never forget that the great end of legislation is to render legislation itself superfluous. Let Nature work unimpeded in social and political life as well as in the sphere of physics or of morals ; then your subjects will be contented with their lot, and your kingdom free from conspiracies, dissensions, and disaster. Above all, do nothing to disturb their primitive simplicity. Do not seek to replace their rough instruments of labour by complicated machines. Such refinements lead to luxury, to scheming, to ambition, and to discontent. The very exercise of ingenuity displayed in the production of labour-saving and delicate apparatus implies a scheming mind. Therefore discourage artificial innovations. The secret of happiness is to be found in quiescence, simplicity, and content, and the only way to attain these is to bring body, passions, intellect, and will into absolute conformity with Nature.

It would be strange, indeed, if such teachings as these had not borne fruit in inducing many persons to retire altogether from the world and embrace a life of seclusion. In fact, the list of Taoist hermits is a pretty long one, and many were those who, retiring to some mountain cave, and devoting themselves to abstract contemplation, received urgent appeals from kings and princes to come and assist them with their wisdom in the task of government, only to reject the petition. They generally chose for their retreat some rocky glen shut in by mountains, sheltered from the burning sun by the thick foliage of trees, and surrounded by every natural feature which makes a landscape lovely. There they passed their lives in that mental abstraction and freedom from interest in mundane affairs which is the nearest approach to the summit of bliss and virtue. Their idea of happiness was, after all, a very pure one. Perfect indifference to love and hate ; the annihilation of all passions, desires, and even preferences ; no striving, or wishing to strive ; nothing but profound apathy and absolute insensibility to those things which, painful or pleasurable, wear out the lives of men : such is the Taoist Ideal. It is a return to the pure, original, self-existent nature of man, which has been despoiled and injured by contact with worldly matters. And there are a few of these Taoists yet to be found, here and there—men who are almost entirely uncontaminated by the follies and impostures of modern popular Taoism, and who may be said to represent the true Apostolic Succession in the Taoist Church. In certain instances, some old worthies, who have been dead and gone for centuries, are believed by the simple mountaineers of China to be still alive. Far away in the

mountain range which stretches from Peking across the provinces of Chih-li and Shan-tung, there is one very sacred peak called the Mount of a Hundred Flowers. It is covered with wild flowers, and its bosky dells are said, and with some truth, to be the lurking-places of wolves and panthers. There, according to the legend, live, partly embedded in the soil, certain ancient Taoist hermits. By a long course of absolute conformity with Nature they have attained to immortality, and are now in the enjoyment of unearthly bliss. To use a Taoist phrase, their faces are washed by the rains of heaven, and their hair combed by the wind. Their arms are crossed upon their breasts, and their nails have grown so long that they curl round their necks. Flowers and grass have taken root in their bodies and flourish luxuriantly; when a man approaches them they turn their eyes upon him, but do not speak. Some of them are over three hundred years old; some, not much over a century; but all have attained to immortality, and some day they will find that their bodies, which have been so long in wearing out, will collapse from sheer withdrawal of vitality, and their spirits be set free. All this is fanciful and fabulous enough; and when I ascended this mysterious mountain a few years ago I certainly did not come across any of these very interesting old persons. But it is undeniable that that indifference or aversion to vulgar objects of desire that characterizes the true Taoist has laid China under many a debt of gratitude. The votary of the Naturalistic philosophy does not always become a hermit any more than a Christian always becomes a clergyman. He is often in the world, and occupies high offices of State. But circumstances make no difference in his character. He is always the same, while living in a mean and dirty lane and drinking from a gourd, as he is in the palace itself, the trusted Minister of a monarch. In this position he retains the same incorruptibility, the same indifference to power, that he has when living in obscurity. China has had many such Ministers, and she is rightly proud of them. Emperors and princes are said to have gone in person to solicit the services of some stern recluse whose fame had reached their ears, and to have been unsuccessful in their suit. The delineation of such characters forms a bright page in many a volume of dusty Chinese lore, and they are now held up to the reverence and imitation of the statesmen of to-day.

I now wish to give you some idea of the moral teachings of Taoism, as exemplified in the classical and popular works of Taoist authors. And the first extract I have to place before you, from the book of Lao-tzŭ himself, is an aphorism which, I am sure you will agree with me, is on a level with the highest teachings of Christianity. It is short, and to the point: "Recompense

injury with kindness." We say, "Return good for evil." And it is worthy of remark that when this sublime doctrine was submitted to the judgment of Confucius he at once condemned it. "With what, then, will you recompense kindness?" he replied. "Recompense kindness with kindness, but injury with justice." Confucius, excellent man as he was, was too narrow and formal in his views to rise to the height of the Taoist Sage. "Tao," says Lao-tzū elsewhere, "is the jewel of the good man, the guardian of the bad." "He who knows others is wise; he who knows himself is enlightened. He who overcomes others is strong; he who overcomes himself is mighty. He who knows when he has enough is rich. He whose memory perishes not when he dies lives for ever." "There is no sin greater than giving rein to desire; there is no misery greater than discontent; there is no calamity more direful than the greed of gain. Therefore the sufficiency of contentment is an everlasting sufficiency." "There are three things which I regard as precious, which I grasp and prize. The first is Compassion; the second is Moderation; the third is Modesty." "The weakest things in this world subjugate the strongest." "There is nothing under Heaven weaker or softer than water; yet it overcomes the hardest and strongest things." "The highest form of goodness resembles water, which is beneficial to everything, and that without struggling." "When there are many prohibitive enactments in the Empire, the people get poorer and poorer. When the people accumulate excess of wealth and goods, both State and families become demoralized. When men are over-skilful, the use of fantastical or curious things arises. When punishments are overdone, malefactors increase in number. Wherefore the Sage says, I do nothing, and the people reform of their own accord; I love quietude, and the people become spontaneously upright; I take no measures, and the people enrich themselves; I have no desires, and the people naturally become simple." "The Sage dwells in the world with a timid reserve; but his mind blends in sympathy with all. The people turn their eyes and ears up to him, and the Sage thinks of them as his children." "He who bears the reproach of his country shall be called the Lord of the Land; he who bears the calamities of his country shall be called the King of the World."

I have already referred to Chuang-tzū, a philosopher who lived two hundred years after his great master—the ablest, boldest, and most audacious of the Taoist writers. It is one of his greatest glories that he protested, with all the eloquence and satire at his command, against the exaggerated reverence paid to books, to tradition, and to authority, by the Confucian school; and that he



claimed and exercised the fullest and completest liberty of thought and argument. There are some striking sentences scattered up and down his fascinating but most difficult pages. "Wherever one's treasure may be," he says in one place, "thither will the heart of man follow it." I need not remind you of a corresponding passage in the Sermon on the Mount. "Those who dream about the pleasures of the wine-cup," he says again, "weep and lament at sunrise. Those who weep in their dreams will go a-hunting when the dawn breaks." A sanguine man who jumps too hastily at conclusions is compared to one who expects to hear an egg crow at daybreak, or thinks he can shoot a bird by looking at a crossbow. "For the Pure Men of old," he tells us elsewhere, "life had no attractions, and death no terrors. Living, they experienced no elation; dying, they offered no resistance. Being born, they accepted the fact; when the oblivion of death came, they just returned to what they had been before. Thus it was that their hearts were free from care, and they preserved a condition of absolute inactivity." And I must not forget a characteristic story told of Chuang-tzū himself upon his deathbed. His last injunction to his weeping relatives was to leave his corpse uninterred. "I will have Heaven and Earth for my sarcophagus," he said; "the Sun and Moon shall be the insignia where I lie in state, and all Creation shall be mourners at my funeral." His friends implored him to forego this strange request, pointing out that the birds would mutilate his corpse; but he replied, "What matters that? Above are the birds of the air, below are the worms and ants; if you rob one to feed the other, what injustice is there done?"

Chuang-tzū was nothing if not paradoxical, and one of his favourite theories was the utility of uselessness. A friend of his once complained that he had a tree, the wood of which was so coarse, viscous, and full of knots, as to be perfectly worthless; its leaves were fetid, and its branches gnarled and crooked, so that no carpenter would cast a glance at it as he passed by. Chuang-tzū replied that it was to its very uselessness that the tree owed its prolonged existence; for just as the beautifully marked skins of the leopard and the tiger led to their being slain, so do the fine properties of superior wood lead to the destruction of a tree. In fact, a coarse and inferior tree, on account of its unfitness to be used for timber, lives out its natural term of years, while one of the monarchs of the forest falls a speedy prey to the woodman's axe; wherefore it is better to be an unlearned and ignorant man, left to the enjoyment of a retired and simple existence, than a clever, pushing, ambitious person, liable to be led into the dangers of public life, where his career may be cut short, either by the cares

and responsibilities of his position, or by the vicissitudes and intrigues that will beset him. "Men understand the use of useful things," says Chuang-tzū, "but they have yet to learn the use of things that are useless."

Lieh-tzū does not hold so high a place in the Taoist hierarchy as Chuang-tzū, but he is, nevertheless, an author of great merit and no small originality. He is principally remarkable for the collection of racy and entertaining stories which his book contains; and, as my lecture has, I am afraid, been a rather dry one hitherto, I will give you some specimens. The first one inculcates a lesson akin to Chuang-tzū's theory of uselessness, and may be called "Moderation is the Best Policy." An elderly man lay dying, and as he felt his end drawing near he called his son to him, and said, "The King has sought to load me with honours, but I have consistently declined them. When I am dead he will seek to bestow honours upon you; but mind what I say—accept no land from him that is worth anything. Now between the States of Ch'u and Yueh there is a bit of ground that is of no use to anybody, and has, moreover, a bad reputation, for many people believe it to be haunted. This is a kind of property that you may keep for ever." Soon after this the man died, and the King offered a beautiful piece of land to his son. The youth, however, declined it, and begged for the bad piece. This was granted to him, and he has never lost possession of it to this day.

At the time when Lieh-tzū wrote, the petty Kings of China were for ever neglecting the welfare of their own States in order to attack their neighbours; a policy which naturally provoked the indignation of the Taoist Sages. The following anecdote, headed "Guard your own Frontier," conveys the gentle though cutting rebuke of Lieh-tzū. A certain Duke once started to attend a Conference of Feudal Princes, the object of which was to organize an attack upon one of the States of the Empire. He was accompanied by an armed force and by one of his principal Ministers, who was observed, during the journey, to cast up his eyes and laugh. "What are you laughing at?" demanded the Duke. "I was laughing," replied the Minister, "about a certain neighbour of mine. He was escorting his wife on her way to pay a visit to her parents, when he espied a very pretty girl picking mulberry leaves for silkworms. Delighted at the *rencontre*, my friend stopped to talk to her, when, happening to turn his head, he saw somebody else paying attention to his wife. That was what I was laughing to myself about." The Duke understood the hint. He did not proceed any farther, but led his soldiers back. It was, however, too late; for they had not arrived in their own country when news reached them that an enemy

had come during their absence and attacked their northern frontier.

One more story, and I have done with Lieh-tzū. The Taoists, as you are aware, despised the Confucianists, and were never tired of poking fun at Confucius. Here is a specimen of their humour. One day, as Confucius was on a journey, he came upon two small boys quarrelling, and asked what was the matter. The first replied, "I contend that when the sun rises it is near to us, and that at the zenith it is a long way off." "And I," said the other, "say that it is farthest when it rises, and nearest in the middle of the day." "It isn't," protested the first. "When the sun rises it looks as big as the tent of a cart, while in the middle of the day it is only the size of a saucer. Isn't it clear that when it is farthest it looks small, and when nearest it looks big?" Then the second rejoined, "But when the sun rises it is quite chilly and cold, while at midday it is broiling hot! Doesn't it stand to reason that it is hottest when it is near, and coldest when far off?" Confucius confessed himself unable to decide between them; whereupon both the urchins mocked him, saying, "Go to; who says that you are a learned man?"

I now pass on to the consideration of two more popular works, which embody a development of Taoism almost entirely untainted with that superstitious element which so soon began to corrupt the purity of the primitive philosophy. The first to which I ask your attention is the *Sū Shū*, or *Book of Plain Words*, a tractate supposed to date from the year 245 B.C. or thereabouts. It constitutes an application of the Taoist doctrines to political, social, and individual life, and, making allowance for differences of time and place, presents a remarkable resemblance to the Jewish *Book of Proverbs*. The writer is addressing, first and foremost, a statesman; and whatever may be thought of the trustworthiness and incorruptibility of Chinese mandarins at the present day, it is unquestionable that the standard here set before them is a very high one. The public man, we are told, should be one whose conduct is a pattern for others to imitate, whose wisdom enables him to give just judgments, whose personal sincerity causes sincerity in others, who can incur hatred and suspicion without deserting his post, and who never takes advantage of his position to secure benefits for himself. "There is nothing," continues our author, "that will enable you to pursue your course in greater peace than the *patient bearing of insult*." "There is no deeper source of joy than the love of goodness; nothing that will give you a profounder insight into hidden things than perfect sincerity in word and deed; but nothing more certain to bring ruin upon you than partiality or injustice."

You must understand that these aphorisms, while applicable to individuals, were primarily intended for the guidance of the governing classes, and that at a time when the disordered condition of the country demanded the exercise of special tact and absolute incorruptibility on the part of magistrates and statesmen. This point is brought out with even greater clearness in the quotations which follow, the shrewdness and knowledge of human nature displayed in which is very marked. "Those whose commands are at variance with their consciences," says the author, "will meet with failure. If a man is *angry without inspiring awe*, the delinquency which has irritated him will be repeated. It is dangerous, first to treat a man with contumely, and afterwards entrust him with responsibility. The man who hides an alienated heart behind a friendly face will be shunned. The sovereign who loves flatterers, and holds aloof from the honest and true, will soon see his kingdom fall. To make little of one's own faults, and be severe on those of others, is not the way to govern. He who bestows rewards with a grudging face will receive a grudging service. He who is niggardly in bestowing, and yet looks for a large return, will get no return at all. He who employs people without regard to their peculiar capabilities, will incur the evil results of his carelessness. He who, in a position of honour, forgets the friends of humbler days, will not enjoy his honours long. If you have no confidence in yourself, you will be distrustful of others; but if you can trust yourself, you will not suspect the people. If you drive a carriage in the ruts of another carriage that has been overturned, you will meet with the same disaster; so, if you follow the example set by a State that has been already ruined, yours will be ruined too."

So much for the *Book of Plain Words*, a manual of much practical and moral value, intended for the guidance of governors. Let us now turn to a more popular treatise, called the *Book of Recompenses*, addressed more particularly to the governed. This work, the Chinese name of which is the *Kan Ying Pien*, is read almost universally in China, and exercises much influence over millions of lives. In it we are brought face to face with the great doctrine of rewards and retributions; and the bulk of the book consists of one tremendously long sentence, containing in my translation of it no fewer than one thousand four hundred words, enumerating the various crimes and misdemeanours which bring the judgment of Heaven upon the perpetrators. The exhortations with which the book opens are singularly beautiful:—

"Advance in all that is in harmony with good; retreat from all that is opposed to it. Walk not in the paths of depravity, nor deceive yourselves by sinning in the dark where none can see you.

Accumulate virtue and store up merit ; treat all with gentleness and love ; be loyal, be dutiful ; be respectful to your elders and kind to your juniors ; be upright yourselves in order that you may reform others ; compassionate the fatherless and widow ; reverence the aged, cherish the young ; do not injure even little insects, or grass, or trees. Pity the wickedness of others and rejoice at their virtues ; succour them in their distresses, and rescue them when in danger ; when a man gains his desires let it be as though his good fortune were your own ; when one suffers loss, as though you suffered it yourself. Never publish the failings of another, or make a parade of your own merits ; put a stop to evil, and afford every encouragement to goodness ; be not grasping, but learn to content yourself with little. When you are reviled, cherish no resentment ; when you receive favours, do so as deprecating your deserts ; be kind and generous without seeking any return, and never repent of anything you may give to others. This," concludes our author, "is to be a good man ; one whom heaven will guard, whom all will respect, whom blessings and honours will accompany, whom no evil will touch, and whom all good spirits will defend." It may, indeed, be questioned whether even Christianity itself affords a higher or more touching portraiture of "the good man" than is sketched in these beautiful sentences. Then follows the long catalogue of sins, any one of which is sufficient to evoke calamities of the direst nature. Among them are enumerated the worrying of dumb creatures, accepting bribes, slaughtering enemies who have tendered their submission, attributing other people's misfortunes to their sins, borrowing money and then longing for the lender's death, mocking another's physical deformities, going to law, forsaking old friends for new, making mischief between relations, and returning evil for good. Finally, we are implored to read and study the book with earnestness and singleness of heart. The first requisite for profiting by its admonitions is unquestioning faith ; the second, diligence in self-cultivation ; the third, determination, or perseverance ; the fourth, complete sincerity. "To attempt to put away the vice and depravity of a lifetime when the sun of life is setting, is like trying to extinguish a blazing waggon-load of hay with a cup of water." If faith be small, the blessing will be small ; if great, the blessing will be great ; while if faith be mixed with doubt, self-injury and self-loss will be the inevitable result. In conclusion :—"Honoured reader," says the author, "I urge you to advance swiftly, fearlessly, and with your whole heart in the course I have here laid down. Know that we are surrounded on all sides by a multitude of spiritual beings, who take note of all we do. Therefore, be watchful, and examine

yourself strictly ; act in accordance with these admonitions at all times ; then you will never fail to do justice to your real self." "The connection between actions and their consequences is the mysterious law of God—the changeless decree pronounced by the Judge of the unseen world."

It would seem, from this last remarkable expression, that, at one stage in Taoist development, belief in a Personal God or Supreme Judge had grown up. The book I have been quoting from is the most popular religious work in China, and naturally affords a marked contrast to the philosophical and abstract ideas contained in the primitive classics. As I have already told you, pure Taoism knows nothing of what we understand by God, and the theistic conception seems to have been imported into it at a much later date. In all other respects, however, the development of Taoism has been one of hopeless degeneracy. The lofty asceticism inculcated by Lao-tzū became vulgarized into a means by which to achieve the sublimation of the body. Speculative research into the mysteries of Nature was degraded into an attempt to transmute the baser metals into gold ; aspirations after a never-ending life beyond the grave sank into the meaner pursuits of prolonged temporal existence ; and communings with the spiritual intelligences of Nature were resolved into a base belief in witchcraft, by proficiency in which the Taoist priest arrogated to himself the power of exorcism over evil spirits. I happen to be acquainted with the present Pope, High Priest, or Grand Wizard of Taoism. His name is Chang, and he is commonly spoken of as Chang T'ien Shih, or Chang the Heavenly Teacher. He claims, and is believed, to be the direct lineal descendant by metempsychosis of a celebrated sorcerer named Chang Tao-ling, who lived early in the Christian era. He possesses the secret of immortality, and is regarded with the utmost veneration by the more uneducated classes in China. He is a great exorcist, and is believed to wield dominion over all the spirits of the Universe and the unseen powers generally, by means of a magic sword. His Palace is situated in the province of Kiang-hsi, where he mimics imperial state, has a large retinue of courtiers, confers ranks and honours among ghosts, spirits, and minor deities with all the dignity of an actual sovereign, and keeps a long row of jars full of captured demons, whom he has disarmed and bottled-up from doing further mischief. When I saw him several years ago he appeared to be about forty years old, of middle height, smooth face, and very oily manners ; and he was good enough to write, and present me with, the remarkable scroll that you are now looking at. It is a charm to ward off evil spirits.

But my time is up, and I do not want your last impressions of Taoism to be connected with any such superstitious folly as is represented by Pope Chang. Let your thoughts revert, rather, to the pure, wise, deep, philosophy of Nature ; to those calm and unworldly sages who are associated with all that is best in Taoism ; to their quietism and passionlessness, their profound insensibility to all those desires, attractions, schemings, pleasures, and ambitions which injure and destroy the pure, original nature of men ; and to the beautiful teachings which those old patriarchs have left behind them. When you think of Taoism, don't think of the Taoist Pope, with his army of ignorant and juggling priests ; think of it rather as a pure and fine philosophy, the moral outcome of which finds its expression in some of the words I have already quoted to you :—

“Recompense injury with kindness.”

“Resent it not, when you are reviled.”

“Nothing will give you greater peace than the patient bearing of insult.”

“He who overcomes others is strong : he who overcomes himself is mighty.”

## THE ORIGIN OF THE SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY DEVELOPED IN BUDDHISM AS IT EXISTS IN CHINA.

BY PROFESSOR SAMUEL BEAL

THE spiritual activity of which I am going to speak is evidenced in the literature produced, and the energy displayed, by the Buddhist community in China, through many centuries of neglect and persecution. We wish to find out the secret of this *energy*, resulting in the activity alluded to.

The Chinese people are naturally sluggish in their ways of thought, and tenacious of old customs. Confucius, their national teacher, and the example they hold up for all ages, was strictly speaking a preserver of old thoughts and doctrines; he originated very little. There was nothing spiritual in his teaching; he avoided all reference to Religion; he regarded Life, existing Life, as the right object of study; he looked on man as a member of society; and his aim was to show that man by complete sincerity may give full development to his Nature and become the equal of Heaven and earth. It is plain he rather retarded than promoted the spiritual activity of which the mind of man is capable, when set free from the trammels of artificial restraints.

Taouism, the teaching of Laou-tseu, the old philosopher, who was born perhaps fifty years before Confucius, or about six hundred years B.C., is an obscure system of transcendental philosophy. Its founder no doubt was a great awakener of thought, but the activity which he developed was more of a philosophical or mystic character. His system has been called a purely politico-ethical one. Confucius tried to reform the Empire by the imposition of forms and artificial Rules, Laou-tseu tried to go back to the state of primitive society before forms were, and before regulations existed. He held fast to three precious things—compassion, economy, humility; and by these he taught the people that they might return home to Taou; that is, as it seems, the original and simplest principle of Purity and Wisdom. He was, strictly speaking, a Reformer, not after the type of Confucius,



who went back to the condition of things in times of Yaou and Shun, and took those times as the model for imitation; but he boldly recurred to the time when the sovereigns possessed Taou, and ruled over a peaceful and contented empire; he opposed what has been called educational activity, and settled down to find out, already in himself, the ideal of man's perfection in the unalloyed simplicity of an original perfection.

There had been a good deal of *material* activity in China, down to the time of the building of the Great Wall, in the reign of the first Universal Emperor She-hwang-ti, about 209 B.C. The great Yu had drained off the waters of the Yellow River, and redeemed a vast area from the condition of a swamp to the richest land of the Empire; the Great Canal, seven hundred miles in length, with its embankments, flood gates, and bridges, is a marvel of engineering skill; the system of tillage and irrigation of their high-level fields exhibited not only the ingenuity of the people but their mechanical skill; whilst the crowning work—the building of the Great Wall—was a gigantic and successful undertaking, showing us what such a people can do when rightly, or rather doggedly, directed by a mind capable of conceiving such a scheme.

I need not refer to the *intellectual* activity of the great mass of the people, in their wonderful development of a native literature. It would occupy too much time even to glance at this feature of their character. I may only say that there is wanting in all this exhibition of material and intellectual progress any sign of spiritual life or aspiration; the sight is that of a people struggling forward on one uniform line of social development, bent only on the happiness of the greater number, careless about the elevation of the race or the cultivation of the latent powers of our spiritual Nature.

A knowledge of Buddhism and its origin was arrived at by the Chinese in the following way:—There had been an irruption of some barbarous people, bordering on the north and north-west of China, about the year 200 B.C., on the territories of another people known as the Yue-ti, or Yue-chi, who had by steps and degrees advanced from the mountainous region of Central Asia, towards the borders of China. These latter people were driven back by the Northern barbarians, who now became a terror to the Chinese themselves. Accordingly in the reign of Wu-ti, of the Han dynasty, 140 B.C., a celebrated minister called Chang-ki'en, was sent to the far west as an envoy to the Yue-ti, with a view to arouse them to resist the advance of the victorious Tartars on the West, whilst the Chinese attacked them on the East. His mission was unsuccessful, but after various

adventures he returned to his country, having been the first native of China, so far as is known, to penetrate to the Caspian Sea, on the West. Shortly after this, viz. B.C. 123, a celebrated general, Ho-ku-ping, was sent by the same Emperor Wu-ti to operate against the barbarians before alluded to, over whom he gained brilliant victories, and in B.C. 121 he penetrated with his army one thousand *li*, i.e. some two hundred miles, beyond the borders of Turkestan, into probably the Kashgar or Yarkand territory, or perhaps so far as Baktra, from which place he brought back as a trophy a golden image, as it is said, of Buddha. This was the first intimation, as it seems, of the Religion of Buddha in China.

This golden or gilded image was, however, to lead to great consequences—for, after the lapse of some fifty years, i.e. in the year 65 A.D., a mission was sent to the Western world, to find out more of the subject. The Emperor Ming Ti had, as related, seen a vision during his sleep, in which he beheld a golden messenger flying through space and entering his palace. There are two versions of this story: the first tells us that the Emperor in his dream saw a golden image about nineteen feet in height, resplendent and with a halo bright as the Sun, enter his palace. This vision the *literati* interpreted as referring to Buddha, a thought doubtless suggested by the golden image brought back by Ho-ku-ping. A second version says that the golden spirit itself spoke to the Emperor, and said: "Buddha bids you send to the Western countries and search for him, with a view to obtain books and images."

Be this as it may, I observe that this story has a non-Chinese origin; the idea of an angel or messenger flying from heaven, and revealing itself by a dream, is evidently of Persian extraction. The Chinese at this time had gained a knowledge of Persia; the astrology and astronomy of that country had already penetrated so far; and now the intervention of heavenly messengers for the first time is heard of. There was a nascent sense of the supernatural in mundane things beginning to be developed, leading to active results; and its origin I take to be in the growing intercourse of China with the West, and especially the borders of Media and Persia. In consequence of the vision he had seen, the Emperor immediately sent Ts'ai Yin, Tsing King, and Wang Tsun, with fifteen others, as envoys to India, to search for and bring back books, and, if possible, Buddhist priests from India. They reached the land of the Yue-ti, i.e. the Vajjis, and after some years' absence returned home with books and images or pictures from the frontier of India, accompanied by two teachers or priests, called respectively Saddharma, and Kasyapa Matanga. These foreign teachers took up their residence at Loyang, and

translated several books, or at any rate compiled them, among which were two I will name—i.e. the *Sûtra of Forty-two Paragraphs* and the *Life of Buddha*.

The *Sûtra of Forty-two Paragraphs* is an epitome of Buddhist Ethics. It was a compilation, not a translation. Its teaching is purely practical: to avoid evil to do good; to banish lust and impure desire from the heart; to progress in the path of righteous doing—these and other duties are named, and the authority of Buddha in each case is quoted; thus:

“Buddha said: ‘A man who rudely grasps or longs for wealth and pleasure is like a child coveting honey surrounding a knife—scarcely has he had one taste of its sweetness before he perceives the pain of his wounded tongue.’”

“Again, Buddha said: ‘A Religious person, or a person practising Religious duties, should regard himself as an ox carrying a load through the mud—tired out with his exertions he presses onward, not daring to turn either to the right hand or the left, till he escapes from it and finds Rest. So the Religious man regards his passions and bodily desires as worse than the mud, and bends his whole soul to the pursuit of the Path, and so longs to escape from sorrow.’”

The *form* of these paragraphs is perhaps borrowed from the usual style of the Confucian books, which generally begin, at least in the *Analects*, with the phrase: “The Master said”—meaning Confucius. And so here each of the forty-two paragraphs begins with the words: “Buddha said.” There is no such method, as far as my reading goes, known in the original works of Buddhism, so that we must presume the style was borrowed from the native literature of China, with a view to commend it to the people. But on the other hand we may notice that this style of composition is the usual one in the edicts of Darius. Thus, in the Behistun inscription we read:—

“Thus says Darius the King: ‘My father was Hystaspis,’” etc.

“And says Darius the King: ‘By the grace of Ormazd I am King,’” etc.

“And says Darius the King: ‘These are the countries which are called mine,’” etc.

“And says Darius the King: ‘Within these countries whoever was pious, to them I afforded protection; whoever was impious I have punished,’” etc.

I only quote these clauses to show the general agreement in *composition* betwixt the paragraphs of the Buddhist *Sûtra*, and the paragraphs of the edicts of Darius.

But I trace also a parallel between the moral or ethical *doctrines* laid down in this early Buddhist compilation, and the morality

or system of morals which characterizes the Iranian or *Persian* system derived from the primitive teaching of Zoroaster. "Zoroaster (we are told by Mr. Mills, the latest exponent of his teaching) was only a link in a far-extended chain of Teachers, who had risen at various times to reform or instruct the Nations. His system, like those of his predecessors and successors, was a growth. His main conceptions had been surmised, though not spoken, before. The world was ripe for them, and when he appeared he had only to utter and develop them. I would not call him a Reformer; he does not repudiate his predecessors; the old Aryan Gods retire before the Spiritual Ahura, but I do not think he specially intended to discredit them. But the great Benevolence, Order, and Power, together with their results in the human subject, i.e. Ahura's Piety, incarnate in men, and their weal and immortality in consequence, crowd out all other thoughts."—(*Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xxxi. *Preface*.)

Again, the same writer says, with regard to the Zoroastrian doctrine, that "it includes this fundamental principle: There can be no happiness undefined by Sorrow, and no goodness which does not resist Sin. Accordingly, the evil principle is so necessary that it is represented by an Evil God. His very name, however, is a thought or a passion."—(*Ibid.*)

The same truths or principles are distinctly laid down in the Buddhist system, as it is exhibited in Chinese writings; Buddha was *the enlightened one*; "the Wisdom and Piety which may become Incarnate in men" was engendered in him as it was in Zaratushttra. He expressly taught that he was only one in a succession of Enlightened Teachers, he was the Tathâgata, i.e. the One who came as his predecessor, the *Rightly Come*. He did not reject the old gods of the people, Brahmâ Sahampati, Indra the Ruler of Heaven (or, of *Devas*), and so on; but he superseded them by the spiritual conception of a perfect Righteousness incarnate in each Buddha. The great Benevolence, Order, and Power are leading thoughts in his system; several temples in China are called the Great Benevolence or Loving-kindness Temples.<sup>1</sup> The "Order" or "Divine Order" is exhibited in the very name of *Dharma*, and the regular constitution of the *Community*; and the Power of the all-powerful one, the Dasabâla, or the tenfold strong one, is constantly attributed as one of the Buddha's attributes. Then again, as to the results in the human

<sup>1</sup> And so in § 7 of the *Sûtra* we are considering, Buddha says: "The man who foolishly does me wrong, to him I will return the protection of my ungrudging Love." Where in the original the expression ungrudging Love points to the four elements of Benevolence, i.e. love, pity, sympathy, and equanimity (or, impartiality).

subject, their weal and immortality, Buddha's teaching expressly points to an ultimate good or deliverance, and consequent happiness—e.g. in § 13:—Buddha said, "Who is the good man? The religious or pious man only is good. And what is goodness? First and foremost, it is the agreement of the will with the conscience, or Reason. Who is the great man? He who is strongest in the exercise of Patience; he who patiently endures wrong and leads a blameless life; he is a man indeed. And who is the truly enlightened? A man wholly freed from the power of sin, possessed of perfect knowledge, sees and hears all things; such a man is, indeed, possessed of the highest good." And such a man, Buddha teaches, has obtained already Eternal rest—to use his own phrase, has tasted the "sweet dew" that is the Nectar of immortality. An immortality, however, independent of the trammels of individual existence, but yet real and substantial—the immortality which attaches to the Being of one who having had no birth cannot die.

Again, the Zoroastrian doctrine asserts that there can be no happiness undefined by Sorrow—that is, that Sorrow is wrapped up with all human sources of happiness, a doctrine fully developed in Buddhism. And in the *Sûtra* before us—e.g. in § 35—Buddha says: "A Religious man has his griefs and sorrows like the rest of the world, for from birth till old age, and from this through disease to death, the sorrows to be endured are endless; the world is encompassed with Sorrow."

This, too, is the first of the four great Truths which lie at the foundation of the system, that Sorrow exists, ever increases, but may be escaped by the Way of the Master's Teaching.

And once more the Evil Principle, or the Evil or Wicked One, *Mâra* or *Pisuna*, is common both to the Iranian and the so-called Indian system. We are *all*, like Buddha himself, subject to the temptations or fascinations or bewitchments of this Evil Principle; he is represented as "the Lord of this world," i.e. this *loka*; and, what is stranger still, in a curious *Sûtra* well known in China, he is represented as coming to Upagupta, one of the early Apostles of Buddhism, as an angel of light, in the shape of Buddha himself, by which Upagupta was so fascinated that he fell down and worshipped him.

It is also a legend known everywhere that *Ânanda* himself, the bosom companion and attendant of Buddha, was so bewitched by the fascinating influence of this Evil One that he failed to ask his Master to continue in the world for the entire age, and in consequence the Buddha died.

The name of the Iranian Evil Principle, however, is a *thought* or a passion—he is called "the Angry Mind;" and so in the

scene of the Great Temptation of Buddha, the three daughters—i.e. the abstract qualities of the Evil Principle—are: Concupiscence, Lust, and Anger; and the prevailing sentiment in the entire episode is, that Māra represents the thought of unbridled Rage. He is the *passion* thought that opposes the *good* thought.

I contend, then, that as we find nothing of all this in the pre-Buddhist literature of India, we must seek its origin elsewhere than in that country; and, from long study, I feel scarcely any doubt that the great outline of the Buddhist system was brought to India by perhaps the very first settlers in the country; that it was repressed and hidden under the paramount authority of the first Aryan invasion; and that after a time there was an upheaval of old beliefs, as the new doctrine was corrupted; and by the personal influence of the great Master himself, the system he taught superseded the old one, and reigned dominant in India for a thousand years.

It may be as well to point out some broad and general reasons for disconnecting the origin of Buddhism with any supposed development of Indian doctrine in that direction.

In the first place, let us take the worship of relics. In China this is a common superstition, where the *sariras* of Buddha, whether a bone or a hair, are religiously preserved. One of the greatest of the *litterati* in the Tang dynasty was banished for protesting against the worship of a decayed bone. This form of worship is coeval with the rise of Buddhism; but in Brahmanism, though the word *stūpa* is used, yet there is no mention whatever of relic worship. It is of pre-Aryan origin, and may be traced back to the world-wide custom of tombs erected over the incinerated remains of some famous hero or chieftain in the early, if not earliest, days of the world's history.

Max Müller states that Buddhism starts with a denial of the sacred character of the *Vedas*.—(*India*, p. 180.) Again, Oldenberg has this remark: "In training of nobles in those lands which were but slightly attached to Brahmanism more attention was paid to martial exercises than to the *Vedas*. Buddhists have not attributed Vedic knowledge to their Master."—(*Buddhism*, p. 100.)

Again, the same writer says: "Vedic culture has not had its home, originally at least, amongst these stocks of the East—i.e. the Sakyas and Magadhas."—(*Ibid.*, p. 411.)

Again, he says the Sakyas and their neighbours were little affected by Brahmanic influences. In fact the whole of the Magadha territory, where Buddha first taught, (although he was born and trained in Kapilavastu), was never wholly Brahmanized, and Buddha did not speak Sanskrit; and he questions whether the Magadhas were Aryans.—(*Ibid.*, pp. 400, 403.)

It is true, Oldenberg remarks that "during Buddha's lifetime, there was a union of Teacher and Master, after the Brahmanical model."—(*Ibid.*, p. 237.)

But why *after* the *Brahmanical* model; there were other Teachers and disciples besides the Brahmans in India; and the model may be sought far afield; there were Schools of the Prophets in Israel; the Magi had their initiated followers in Persia or Media; the followers of Pythagoras and the early Greek schools might show us a model. In fact it is an elemental arrangement, resulting from the very nature of the thing, that a Teacher must have followers. And we do not wonder then that it was so with the Buddha. Only in his case the disciples were won by the exercise of spiritual control, the activity of the Order was spiritual—i.e. not so much logical or disputative, as authoritative over the conscience. It was a spiritual activity that now began to work in India, and was transferred to China as a part of the System inaugurated by the Master.

We have a striking example of this spiritual influence in the very first account of Buddha's career. He had gained illumination, and was a Supreme Buddha. Oldenberg would tell us he was "a converted man." He had hesitated for a time whether the world was prepared for his Doctrine, but, at last, was persuaded by Brahmā Sahampati to go forth and preach. I say *preach*, because he had a message to the conscience, and not to the intellect only. He prepared, therefore, to begin his work. His old friends, who were not necessarily Brahmans, were dead, and so he went to Benares to seek for and convert the five men who had been sent by his Father to watch him and track his steps. These five men had left him, disappointed because, after a six years' fast, the Teacher had discovered that Right Wisdom did not result from extreme asceticism, as it certainly did not from unrestraint. They had left him partly in anger, but more in distrust, and had gone to Benares. He went on his way thither: on the road he met a young Brahman called Upaka; the youth was arrested by the strange appearance of the Master, so self-possessed, so noble in his gait, and unaffected in his deep purpose. There was, as Mrs. Jameson says of the expression of Christ's face, in *his* face a sort of divine sympathy towards the human race; they spoke together, and the young man, overwhelmed with the feeling that he had been in contact with some one greatly superior to himself, hesitated, halted as he went on, looked back, but finally separated himself from the fascination of this strange Presence.

The Master went on—came to Benares, and advanced to the Park of Deer, where the five men were practising their religious

duties. When they saw him, strong in his purpose, recovered from his exhausting fast, commanding in his person—they declared they would not move nor greet him as he came. The Master approached still nearer, and then, strange to say—drawn by an irresistible charm, beyond control—the five men rose, saluted him as he advanced, prepared him a seat, bathed his feet, and by the first Sermon he preached were converted. This Sermon, on the four great Truths, is well known. “Sorrow and deliverance from Sorrow” is the “*Text* ;” the “*Sermon*,” how to find deliverance and arrive at Rest. And the consequence, as the Chinese version of the *Mahākavya charita* says, was this:—

“The great Lord Buddha now has moved the World.  
He turns the Religious Wheel of perfect Purity.  
The stormy winds are hushed, the clouds dispersed.  
Down fall from space the heavenly flowers.  
The Angels revel in celestial joys—filled with unutterable gladness.”

This idea of angels rejoicing in worldly concerns is entirely non-Indian or un-Brahmanic; it has the ring of other teaching, and of people far removed from any Indian centre.

But I will pass on to observe proofs of the spiritual activity excited in China by the Introduction of Buddhism.

Let us allude to the vast body of Buddhist Literature produced in that country. When the entire copy of the Buddhist Tripitaka in Chinese, was sent to this country a few years ago, I was instructed by the Secretary of State for India to catalogue and report upon it.

As it came to us in several huge boxes, I calculated that, if one packet were placed on another in an upright position, the whole pillar of books would be something like one hundred and twenty feet in height.

Now this literature is principally a body of translations—translations from various originals—made by foreign priests or teachers, who were constrained by a desire to propagate their religion, to travel to the East. As I have already noticed, the first Teachers who came to China arrived there about 73 A.D., and brought with them books—some of which, as they translated them, still survive. Temples were founded for their accommodation—and the Emperor and the court were their Patrons.

Following them, in rapid succession, other foreign teachers reached the country: some were Parthians, some were Huns, and some Indians. They all brought books and went on translating; and the Chinese went on building temples and monasteries, till the whole country was covered with them. There were intervals of persecution and reaction, but there was a spiritual activity abroad, which had scarcely ever been equalled before in



the country. Now what was the origin of this? Partly, no doubt, it resulted from an enthusiasm derived from the foreign teachers themselves, but principally from the System.

The secret of the power of the Buddhist doctrine lies in this, that it is an utterly unselfish one; it teaches us from Buddha's example that the greatest good and happiness a man can enjoy is to do good to others. The thought of self is evil. The love of others than ourselves is the end of Religion. Hence the example of Buddha is constantly quoted; e.g. Fa-hien, the Chinese pilgrim to India, tells us he heard the following announcement made by an eloquent man in Ceylon. This man, mounted on a gaudily caparisoned elephant, and clad in royal apparel, spoke thus: "Our Bodhisattva—i.e. Buddha in a previous condition—during endless ages, underwent every kind of austerity for the sake of delivering all flesh. He spared himself no personal suffering, he left his home and country, he gave up wife and children, he tore out his eyes to heal the blind, he cut his flesh to feed the dove, he gave his head in alms, he sacrificed his body to feed a tiger, he grudged neither his marrow nor his brain. Thus he endured every sort of anguish for the goods of others. After he became a Buddha he lived in the world forty-nine years to teach and convert men. He gave rest to the wretched—he saved the lost; then he died—the eyes of the world were put out, and all living things were filled with sorrow. After ten days his relics will be brought forth, let all persons come and do them reverence."

Now here lies much of the power of the Buddhist Teaching—this idea of unselfish thought for others—and it is this which led to the spiritual activity of which I am speaking, and to the diffusion of the vast literature in which these instances of self-denial are recorded. It was all strange to the Chinese, but it commended itself to their consciences.

Take again the profound doctrine embodied in Buddhism, and developed in China. I mean the vast consequences of rightly or wrongly formed *character*. This character is formed by conduct. The Buddhists, we are told, do not acknowledge a human "soul." I think Butler in his works does not use this word; he speaks of a vital principle, but not of the soul. It is difficult to define the word—we might understand the independent existence of *spirit*, but the word "soul" as a living personal identity is difficult to define. Anyhow, it was not understood in the way we understand it by the Buddhists. They spoke of the soul in the eye, in the ear, and in the different organs or entrances of the body. They denied that the sight was, or contained, the soul; or the hearing; or the smelling; whatever was apprehended by the senses, even down to "mind," i.e. the cognitive faculty—all these

were unreal, vanishing, and delusive; in this way they denied the existence of any monad like our conception of soul. But they affirmed the re-productive power of *character*, and also what is called Salvation by character. Now I maintain that this word "character" and what is called *soul* are identical. I will quote from a little tract before me that some one sent me yesterday morning. It is entitled *The Theology of the Future*, by Dr. James Freeman Clarke. I may say I know nothing of this gentleman, or his Publishers; but I am bound to say there is much to recommend his tract. The fourth section is headed "Salvation by Character," and he proceeds to say Salvation means the highest peace and joy of which the soul is capable. But here the writer runs counter to the Platonic doctrine, which is taken up by Butler: if the soul has a character it is not a simple entity, simply soul; it is soul *plus* character, and being compound it cannot be eternal. So that it seems soul and character must be identical and simple. And here I cannot but notice the marked agreement between the teaching of Buddha and Plato on this point of "simple being;" the Buddhists say whatever is compounded is temporary—the word is *Samkhāra*, which Mr. Rhys Davids translates "confection;" exactly the same word is used by Plato when he speaks of compounded things being transitory; he says they are *σύνθετα* (*Phædo*, cap. 25), which is very much like the Buddhist *Samkhāra*; but, he argues, the soul—where he does not mean the individual soul, but the part of the universal soul, separated for a time but destined to return—is a *simple* essence, and therefore immortal; so, with the Buddhists, character is immortal—not the same identical character, but the result of conduct in character—good or bad—ever tending to the *ultimate* character of unalloyed and simple goodness; or, to use other words, the character of God, besides whom there is none Good.

Now what I want to say is, that there is a power in this thought which must result in activity. We are forming our *character*; it is in our own hands; it is a noble work; we are building up gold, silver, hay, stubble—the fire will try us. Here I repeat is the secret of the power of Buddhist doctrine: whether he was right or wrong in details the Master laid down in *this* (as in the former case of vicarious suffering) a principle that commends itself to the Conscience and the untrammelled Reason. We are building ourselves up, shaping ourselves—i.e. our characters—for the future; the responsibility is great, but the perfect daylight and the freedom in which we bask, the nobility of thought, the high resolve, the steadfast purpose—all these as active or motive powers are the spurs that urge us on to a virtuous Life. I cannot allow myself, although encroaching on your time, to

pass by the identity of belief, or *fancy*, if you will, on this point, between the Greek and Buddhist definition of this all-potent element. The Buddhist says that *Karma*, which the Chinese translate as "building up" or "structure" (in the sense of *creating*), is the supreme Arbiter. Now Karma simply means the formation of character, which is in fact the power that decides our future destiny; the Greeks have the same word, almost identical in root formation—I mean *κῆρ* or destiny; and precisely as in the Buddhist stories, which I might read if there were time, the Divine Śakra asserts that he can do nothing against the consequences of Karma, so the Greek Zeus confesses he is impotent to resist Fate or *κῆρ*.

The two thoughts are identical; the idea of Karma, so far from being only Indian, lies embedded in the earliest stratum of human speculation; and, so far, is worthy of our consideration in tracing the origin of these beliefs.

Thus we may trace the influence of Buddhism in China back to the original conception of Reward and Punishment.

I suppose this thought lies at the root of popular Religion. We need not try to define the character of the Reward or Punishment, but simply state that there are consequences accruing from the practice of virtue, or the contrary, which must certainly overtake us.

I pass on to observe some facts connected with the cosmogony of the Buddhists, as it has been developed in China. The influence of what is called the Lotus School has resulted in some extremely interesting speculations. The great problem before the world had been to account for the origin of things. You remember, I daresay, the remarkable passage in the tenth book of the *Rig Veda*, in which the originator is spoken of as "breathing," "breathless."

The search after this first cause ended in the symbolism of the Lotus, which floats in its loveliness on the surface of the Lake, but comes from an unknown source. So the Lotus was used as the emblem of what we should call creation. Whence come these worlds around us? who is the First? where His abode? The answer was: "We cannot tell; the Lotus floats upon the Water—that is all we know."

Now let us trace the active growth of this conception.

The first and earliest idea was, that all things spring from Water; hence the world, or the four quarters of the world, are represented as floating on the universal Ocean, placed symmetrically, thus.<sup>1</sup>

In the centre is the Divine Mountain, the Olympus of the

<sup>1</sup> Diagrams were here shown.

Greeks, the Zagros of the Iranians, the Meru of the Indians; around this mountain are the rock girdles which prevent approach by mortal man to the abode of the Gods; beyond the outer girdle of Rocks, in the salt sea, are the four quarters of the world, denoted by the figures and the accompanying islands.

Here we have the earliest thought of a central inaccessible mountain, and the four quarters, or the four winds, into which the world is divided as it floats on the Sea.

At the base of the central mountain are the four guardians, who keep the way and guard the Residence of the Gods. This idea is also a primitive one, denoted in Homer by the Horæ or Seasons, who keep the gates of Olympus.

On the summit of the Divine Mountain are the abodes of the Gods, or the thirty-three Gods, over whom Sakra the Powerful One reigns supreme. These are the *Ολυμπια δώματα*; the number thirty-three is known in the *Vedas*, incorporated therein, doubtless, from the old tradition, which may be traced back to the period when Time or Chronos was the Supreme Ruler, and when the year, the four seasons, and the twenty-eight days made up the thirty-three. Above this Paradise are the three tiers of higher Heavens:—The Kama Heavens, in which there are earthly pleasures; the Rupa Heavens, in which there are Forms but no earthly pleasures; and the Arupa Heavens, in which there are neither Forms nor human conceptions. This was the extended idea of the One System of worlds. Buddha taught in agreement with the oldest beliefs that all the denizens of these worlds are subject to decay and death; just as Homer makes Nectar a condition of prolonged life to the Gods, without which they would perish; Buddha, therefore, would have nought to say about such a Heavenly State; he sought after a condition of Being that never began and never will perish. An Eternal state of Existence, and he called this *Nirvâna*, a non-breathing state, like that of Him before His breath went forth upon the Waters.

Before passing on to notice the extension of this system of worlds, I will notice that underneath the earth, the Buddhists, and especially the Chinese Buddhists, place the various prisons in which the wicked are confined for vast, but not endless, periods of time; they are called earth prisons, and the sufferings endured in each are supposed to be material. The lowest prison is a burning one, surrounded by an iron wall—it is the Tartarus of Homer (cf. *Iliad*, viii. 15), with its iron gates and brazen walls, the deepest underneath the earth. The lowest place of punishment is called Avichi, which the Chinese translate “without interval;” there is no cessation of pain here, literally the fire is not quenched, but yet there is Hope of Escape.

And now, under the persuasion of the infinity of the Universe, the Buddhists began to multiply their systems of worlds in this way: they supposed a repetition of mountains and heavens, extending through space; over which, however, there was but one Buddha; they then supposed these extended systems to be multiplied one over the other, the whole springing from a Lotus, denoting their confessed Ignorance of the Originator; advancing still, they placed this complex system of worlds in the centre, and other similar systems to the number of ten surrounding it. These systems were ruled over by other Buddhas.

Advancing yet, they place ten such chiliocosms, ruled over by different Dhyâni Buddhas; and finally, in sheer despair, they multiply these systems, each one so inconceivably vast, indefinitely, till they become as numerous as the sands of countless Rivers Ganges.

Now the origin of this cosmogony was doubtless, in the first stages of it, inherited from primitive time. The surrounding streams of ocean, the central mountain and the abode of the Gods—these are fables common to all nations; but the expansion of the belief or system is doubtless Buddhistic, and the introduction of the Lotus peculiarly so. But whether matured in the valley of the Ganges, or on the high lands of Asia abounding with lakes, or even in Egypt, we can hardly say. This much, however, appears likely, that the final stage, where the worlds and systems are made as numerous as the Ganges sands, was reached in the dreamy land of Eastern India, and thence carried to China, where it now finds acceptance, and has led to a similar state of dreamy philosophical speculation.

I must hasten to point out one more feature in the Buddhist development in China. I mean the belief in a Western Paradise, with which is connected the worship of Amitâbha, and Kwan-yin.

The idea of a place of happy Rest in the Western regions of the world is an old and well-known one. The sight of the glorious region of the setting sun, so peaceful, so lovely, so full of quiet hope, may have given birth to the thought. We cannot tell. But at any rate, so early as 149 A.D., a Parthian prince, who would have been probably Vologases III. of Parthia, if he had not become a Buddhist monk, came to China and translated the *Sûtra* of boundless years, i.e. of Amitâbha or Amitâyus. This gives us an account of the Western Paradise; it is a place beautiful to behold, its golden streets and lovely tanks, the flowers and birds and palaces, all so exquisite; and the happy people who dwell there, worshipping the eternal and all-glorious Amita—this was the fable that excited the wonder and drew out the active spiritual powers of the Chinese converts. Let me only

give one example. It is that of a poor Chinese Pilgrim, whose brief history is given us by I-Tsing. His name was Shang-tih.

The narrative is this: "*Shang-tih*, a contemplative priest, of Ping-chau. He longed for the joys of the Western Paradise, and, with the view of being born there, he devoted himself to a life of purity and religion (*reciting the name of Buddha*). He vowed to write out the whole of the *Prajña-Sūtra*, occupying 10,000 chapters. Desiring to worship the sacred vestiges, and so by this to secure for himself the greater merit, with a view to a birth in that heaven, he travelled through the nine provinces (*of China*), desiring wherever he went to labour in the conversion of men and to write the sacred books. Coming to the coast, he embarked in a ship for Kalinga. Thence he proceeded by sea to the Malaya country, and thence wishing to go to Mid-India, he embarked in a merchant-ship for that purpose. Being taken in a storm, the ship began to founder, and the sailors and merchants were all struggling with one another to get aboard a little boat that was near. The captain of the ship being a believer, and anxious to save the priest, called out to him with a loud voice to come aboard the boat, but Shang-tih replied, 'I will not come; save the other people.' And so he remained silently absorbed, as if a brief term of life were agreeable to one possessed of the heart of Bôdhi. Having refused all help, he clasped his hands in adoration, and looking towards the west, he repeated the sacred name of Amita, and when the ship went down these were his last words. He was about fifty years of age. He had a follower unknown to me, who also perished with his master, also calling on the name of Amita Buddha."

We cannot doubt that this idea of the Eternal One was, in the first place, borrowed from the boundless Time of the Zoroastrian belief, and became merged in the idea of Mithras, the glorious light; and so the Amita of the Chinese is both the eternal and the altogether glorious.

The worship of Kwan-yin or Avalokiteshvara, the looking-down God, the personification of Mercy, is equally common in China. This Being is sometimes represented as a Female with a child on her knee, at other times as a youth or a God. The Chinese everywhere invoke her aid. There is a Liturgy, as complex as any Western manual of the same sort, used for her worship: and the Ritual itself is very imposing.

I presume this idea of Kwan-yin was introduced into China with that of Amita Buddha, and that both were derived from the Persian. The worship of Mithras and Anahita, the pure Goddess of the Waters, was a favourite one in the times of Artaxerxes Mnemon; and, from his patronage, is said to have extended from

East to West. The Buddhists, owing to its popularity, incorporated it in their system; and in China, now, the invocation of Amita and aspirations for mercy and protection at the hands of Kwan-yin form the staple part of the worship and belief of the majority of the people.

All this has created a spiritual activity, the origin of which must first of all be sought in the fundamental thoughts of the system itself: Its unselfishness, its appeal to the conscience, its vast scope, its future hope, its belief in the Mercy of the Merciful One, the Glory and Eternity of the All-Glorious and Eternal One, and the Future Rest in Paradise.

These thoughts are not Chinese, they are not Indian. They must be looked for in that neighbourhood where in the early beginning there was a knowledge of Truth as it came from the Source of Truth, and which, though dimmed by the accretions of time and perverted by fond inventions, still survived to give some faint light and hope to Nations that sat in darkness and under the Shadow of Death.

## SHINTÔISM.

BY ISABELLA BIRD (MRS. BISHOP).

Of the "spiritual centres" of which these lectures treat, *Shintô*, which has fallen to my lot, is certainly among the feeblest; and, never a religion in the highest sense of the word, it has come to be the most frivolous of superstitions, "ready to vanish away," and only deserves our notice as being up till to-day the national religion of the Japanese, one of the most acute, progressive, and materialistic peoples on the face of the earth.

Scholars hesitate to decide whether *Shintô* is or is not "a genuine product of Japanese soil." The Japanese call their ancient religion *Kami no michi* ("The way of the gods"); foreigners adopt the Chinese form of the same, and call it *Shintô*. By *Shintô* is meant the religion which was found spread over Japan when the Buddhist propagandists arrived in the sixth century A.D., and which at the restoration of the Mikado (the so-called Spiritual Emperor) to power in 1868, became the State religion, or, to use our own phraseology, the Established Church. By the term *pure Shintô*, as exhibited in the shrines of Isé and elsewhere, is meant the ancient faith as distinguished from that mixture of it with Buddhism and Confucianism known as *Reigôbu Shintô*, which encounters the traveller everywhere in the shape of gaily decorated lacquer temples, swarming with highly coloured and grotesque divinities carved in wood.

Japanese *Shintô* cosmogony and mythology are one, and in both Japan is the universe. *Shintô* has three legendary mythical periods, during which the islands of Japan and many gods came into being. In the third period Amaterasu, the sun-goddess, was supreme. This "heaven-lighting" divinity, finding that Japan was disturbed by the unending feuds of the earthly gods, among whom Okuniushi, their ruler, could not keep order, despatched Ninigi, a heavenly god, to Higa in central Japan, and compelled the former incompetent divinity to resign his disorderly rule into his hands, permitting him, however, the easier task of ruling the Invisible, while Ninigi and his successors, the Mikados, have continued to rule the Visible. The struggles for



supremacy between the gods and their offspring continued to afflict the Visible till 660 B.C., when Jimmu Tenno, the fifth in descent from the sun-goddess, overthrew the Kiushiu rebels, subjugated a large portion of the main island, and settled there with his warriors. This legendary event is the dawn of Japanese history, and the starting point of Japanese chronology. The 7th of April is fixed as the anniversary of Jimmu Tenno's accession to the throne, he is deified and worshipped in a thousand shrines, and from him the present Mikado claims direct descent through one hundred and twenty Mikados who have preceded him, the "divine right extending yet farther back through five generations of terrestrial gods, and seven of celestial to the great sun-goddess, from whom he inherits the Japanese regalia—the Mirror, the Sword, and the Stone. The Mikado is the lineal descendant of the gods—nay, he is himself a god, and his palace is a temple. His heavenly origin has been through all historic days the foundation of Japanese government, and it and the duty of unquestioning obedience to his commands have been the highest of Shintô dogmas.

Between 97 and 30 B.C., Sugin, the reigning Mikado, and of course a demi-god, appeared as a reformer, called on the people to worship the gods, performed a symbolic purification for the nation, built special shrines for the worship of some of the divinities, removed the mirror, sword, and stone from the palace to a shrine built for their custody, and appointed his daughter their priestess. This mirror rested, at least till 1871, in the shrines of Isé, of which I shall speak presently.

In the middle of the sixth century B.C., as is supposed, a great tide of religious change passed over Japan, which has never wholly ebbed, for Buddhist missionaries from Korea proselytized so successfully in high quarters that a decree was issued in the eighth century ordering the erection of two Buddhist temples, and a seven-storied pagoda in every province. The singular supremacy of Buddhism, however, is due to a master-stroke of religious policy achieved by a Buddhist priest now known as Kôbô-daishi, who, in the ninth century, in order to gain and retain a hold for his creed over the mass of the people, taught that the Shintô gods were but Japanese manifestations of Buddha, a dogma which reconciled the foreign and native religions, and gave Buddhism several centuries of ascendancy over both Shintô and Confucianism, till it was supplanted about two centuries ago in the intellects of the educated by the Chinese philosophical system of Choo He, which in its turn is being displaced by what is known in Japan as the "English Philosophy," represented by Mill, Herbert Spencer, and others.

The Buddha-izing the old gods, and incorporating the ancient traditions of the divine ancestors and early heroes of the Japanese with the ethical code and dogmas of Buddhism much watered down, produced that jumble before referred to, on which the reigning Mikado bestowed the name of *Reigôbu Shintô*, or "two-fold religious doctrine." From that time Buddhist and Shintô priests frequently celebrated their ceremonies in the same temples, the distinctive feature of Shintô, the absence of idols, effigies, and other visible objects of worship disappeared, and the temples became crowded with wooden images of the Shintô hero gods, alongside of those of Buddha and his disciples, only a very few shrines retaining the simplicity of the ancient faith. In the eighteenth century an attempt was made by a few learned and able men to revive "pure Shintô," and adapt it to those cravings of humanity which Buddhism had partially met, but it failed, and has resulted mainly in affording materials for the researches of Mr. Sataw, Mr. Kemperman, and other European scholars.

At the restoration of the Mikado to temporal power in 1868, Buddhism was practically "disestablished," and Shintô reinstated as the State religion owing to its value as a political engine, but it was impossible to re-introduce many of its long abandoned usages alongside of Western civilization, and the number of those who regard its divinities with anything like religious reverence is very small.

Since that year the images and the gaudy and sensuous paraphernalia of a corrupted Buddhism have been swept out of many of the temples, but the splendour of the lacquer and arabesques remains, as in the temples of Shiba at Yedo and the shrines of Nikko; and the primitive simplicity of the plain wooden structure with the thatched tent-roof and perfectly bare interior, is only seen in the Isé shrines and in some other places.

Three thousand seven hundred gods are known to have shrines. Each hamlet has its special god as well as each shrine, and each god has his annual festival or merry-making, while many have particular days in each month on which people visit their shrines. Every child is taken a month after birth to the shrine of the district in which he is born, and the divinity of the shrine is thenceforward his patron.

On certain occasions the priests assemble in the larger temples and chant certain words to an excruciating musical accompaniment, but this is in no sense "public worship;" and indeed worshippers are seldom if ever admitted within Shintô temples. The god is supposed to be present in the temple dedicated to him,

and the worshipper standing outside attracts his attention by pulling the cord of a metal globe, half bell, half rattle, which hangs at the open entrance. The act of worship usually consists in clapping the hands twice and making one or more hasty genuflexions, and people make pilgrimages of several hundred miles to the most celebrated shrines to do no more than this, to cast a few of the smallest of bronze coins down upon the temple threshold, and to buy a relic or charm. The festival days of the gods of the larger temples are occasions of much gaiety and splendour. They are celebrated by music, dancing, and processions, in which huge and highly decorated cars take part, on and in which are borne certain sacred emblems covered with gorgeous antique embroideries, which at other times are kept in the temple storehouses. Ancient classical dances or posturings are also given on covered platforms within the temple grounds, and in these a maiden invariably appears, dressed in white, and bearing a wand in her hand. The modern Japanese are ignorant of the meaning and history of nearly all the public Shintô ceremonies.

In travels extending for several months in the interior of northern Japan, during which time I lived altogether among the people, I had many opportunities for learning what Shintô is as a household religion. Easy and unexact as it is in public, it is not less so in private. It has no penances, no deprivations, and no frequent and difficult observances. Certain ceremonies, however, are invariably attended to. In every Shintô house, there is a *Kami-dana* or god shelf, on which is a miniature temple in wood, which contains tablets covered with paper, on which are written the names of the gods in which the household places its trust; and monumental tablets, with the posthumous names of the ancestors and deceased members of the family. Fresh flowers, and specially the leafy twigs of the *cleigera japonica* are offered there, together with *saké* (or rice beer) water, and a minute portion of the rice boiled for the good of the household. The glow-worm glimmer of the small lamps which are lit at sunset in front of these shrines, is one of the evening features of the cities of Japan.

Forms of prayer have been published even as late as 1873, but it is regarded as enough to frame a wish without uttering it, and most Shintôists content themselves with turning to the sun in the early morning, rubbing the hands slowly together, and bowing. The directory for prayer is, "Rising early in the morning, wash your face and hands, rinse out the mouth, and cleanse the body. Then turn to the province of Yamato (which contains the shrines of Isé), strike the palms of the hands together, and

worship," i.e. bow to the ground. It may interest this audience to hear a specimen of one of the most enlightened of the old Shintô prayers, translated by Mr. Sataw from a book put forward by the Mikado Jimtôku in the thirteenth century, and which is still used on rare occasions by a few more earnest Shintôists. "From a distance I reverently worship with awe before Ameno Mi-hashira, and Kuni no Mi-hashira (the god and goddess of wind), to whom is consecrated the palace built with stout pillars at Tatsuta no Tachinu in the department of Heguri, in the province of Yamato. I say with awe, Deign to bless me by correcting the unwilling faults which, heard and seen by you, I have committed, by blowing off and clearing away the calamities which evil gods might inflict, by causing me to live long like the hard and lasting rock, and by repeating to the gods of heavenly origin and the gods of earthly origin the petitions which I present every day along with your breath, that they may hear with the sharp-earedness of the forth-galloping colt." It may be remarked that Shintô, unlike most systems, does not inculcate the practice of any form of bribery with the view of securing the good will of the gods.

Shintô has four distinctive emblems, familiar to every traveller in Japan—the *torii*, the *gohei*, the mirror, and the rope. The *torii*, though sometimes made of stone, properly consists of two barked, but unpainted tree-trunks planted in the ground, on the top of which rests another tree-trunk, with a horizontal beam below. The name means "birds' rest," for on it the fowls offered, but not sacrificed, to the gods were accustomed to rest. This emblem stands at the entrance of temple grounds, in front of shrines and sacred trees, and in every place specially associated with the native divinities. In the persecution which was waged against the Romish Christians some time ago, the token of recantation required was that they should pass under the *torii*. In some places, as at the great Temple of the Fox at Fushima, there are avenues composed of several hundreds of these, and whether large or small, the *torii* is a favourite *ex voto*.

The *gohei* is a slim wand of unpainted wood, with two long pieces of paper notched alternately on opposite sides depending from it. These represent offerings of rough and white cloth, which were supposed to have the effect of attracting the gods to the place where they were offered, but have come to be popularly regarded as gods themselves. Indeed, they seem to resemble the white wands with dependent shavings, which are worshipped by the Ainos of Yezo, who are by many regarded as the remnant of the aborigines of Japan.

In many Shintô temples a circular steel mirror is the only

object, and even this is only exposed to view where sometime Shintô has been jumbled up with Buddhism. Much ingenious rubbish has been devised to account for the presence of this emblem, and a few fanciful Western writers have chosen to regard it as symbolizing Truth, but the plain fact is that every such mirror is a copy of that which has rested at Isé for nearly two thousand years, which the sun-goddess presented to Ninigi as an emblem of herself when she sent him down to govern the world. The polished surface is neither a mirror of truth nor of the human soul, but is simply a very intelligible symbol of a rude compound of nature and myth worship, of nature as the sun, deified and personified as the myth Amaterasee, or the "sun-goddess."

The last emblem, also of legendary origin, is a rope of rice straw, varying in thickness from the heavy cable which often hangs across a *torii*, or temple entrance, to that no thicker than a finger, which is suspended across hosedoors or surrounds sacred trees, and which has straw tassels or strips of white paper dangling from it.

The true Shintô temple, or shrine, is of unpainted wood, and the tent-like roof is thickly thatched. The floor is covered with thick rice-straw mats, let into wooden frames. There are no ornaments, idols, effigies, or ecclesiastical paraphernalia of any kind. Plain *gohei* and minute offerings of saké, rice, and other vegetable food on unlacquered wooden trays, and some sprigs of the evergreen *cleigera japonica* alone denote the use of the barren temple of a barren creed. In a receptacle behind there is a case only exposed to view on the day of the annual festival, and this is said to contain the spirit of the deity to whom the temple is dedicated, "the august spirit substitute."

There are about ninety-eight thousand Shintô shrines in Japan, and twenty thousand priests or shrine-keepers, who may be regarded as paid officials of the government. These are allowed to marry, and do not shave their heads. There is an appropriation of £58,000 annually for the Shintô religion. In the restored order the department which dealt with the affairs of the earthly and heavenly gods held the highest place in the scale of official precedence; but in 1877, or in less than ten years, it sank by "leaps and bounds" to the indignity of being transferred to a sub-department of the Ministry of the Interior!

The traveller in Japan meets continually with bands of pilgrims on their way to Isé, the centre of Shintô, in the province of Yamato in Central Japan. Dismiss from your minds the idea of austerity, penance, privation, worship, sanctity, and vows, which the word pilgrimage conjures up. "A pilgrimage" to

Isé is the greatest frolic and holiday of the year or the lifetime, a prolonged picnic, a vast merry-making. In spring the roads are thronged with bands of girls and companies of men in holiday costume, singing and laughing; bowing to every high hill and every large tree, visiting theatres and shows; and after throwing their coins on the white cloth in front of the Isé temples, surrendering themselves to the pleasures of Jamada, a city abounding in vicious attractions.

The two temples of Isé, the Gekû and the Naiku, called by a name which signifies "the two great divine palaces," are the cradle and kernel of Shintô; and are to Shintôists, even in the irreligious present, in a slight degree something of what Mecca is to Mussulmans, and the Holy Places of Jerusalem to Greeks and Latins. There is no time of the year in which there is an absolute cessation of pilgrims, and though the artizans of Tôkiyô now think it possible to gain a livelihood without beseeching the protection of the Isé deities, and the shopboys of the trading cities no longer beg their way to Jamada in search of the Isé charms; the credulous and simple peasant cannot yet feel safe without the paper ticket inscribed with the name Ten-shôkô-daijin (the principal diety of Isé), which is obtainable only at the Isé shrines. Relics of Isé are in every house; the Isé deities are at the head of the national Pantheon; the pilgrimage to Isé is an episode in the life of every Shintôist; and from north to south, thousands of heads are daily bowed in the direction of "The Divine Palaces of the most holy gods of Isé.

Allusion has been previously made to the fact that in every Japanese household there is a "shelf for gods," on which is a shrine containing paper tickets, on which the names of various gods are written, one of which is always Ten-shôkô-daijin. This special ticket is supposed to contain between two thin slips some shavings of the wands used by the priests of Isé at the two annual festivals, and is able to protect its possessor from misfortune for half a year, at the end of which time the *o-harai*, as it is called, ought to be changed for a new one; but modern carelessness is content to renew the charm once in two or three years or longer. The old tickets ought to be burned or cast into a river or the sea, but are usually employed to heat the bath used by the maiden priestesses, so-called after their posture dances at the annual festival of the patron god of any locality. The fact of the universal distribution of these *o-harai*, connects every family in Japan with the Isé shrines and Shintô superstition. Up to 1868, the *o-harai* were hawked about Japan, but the government subsequently prohibited the practice, and now they can only be obtained at the Isé shrines themselves, or at certain accredited agencies.

The two groups of shrines are three miles and a half from each other, at Furuichi and Jamada, which towns are, for Japan, marvels of solid and picturesque building, and are made up chiefly of inns, tea-houses, shops for the sale of *ex votos* and Shintô toys and relics, and places of vicious attractions. The shrines are exact copies of each other, and both stand in the midst of ancient cryptomeria, each stately tree in Shintô fancy worthy to be a god; but it is the camphor groves, the finest in Japan, covering the extensive and broken grounds with their dark and unique magnificence, which so impress a stranger as to make him forget for a moment the bareness and meanness of the shrines which they overshadow.

The grand entrance to the Gekû shrine is reached from Jamada by crossing a handsome bridge over the river Izuzu, in which the pilgrims wash their hands before going to the temple. On the other side is a wide space enclosed by stone-faced banks. On the right there is a building used by the temple attendants, where fragments of the wood used for the shrines, packets of the rice offered to the gods, and other charms are sold. The entrance to the actual temple grounds is under a massive *torii*. These grounds are of great extent, and contain hills, ravines, groves, and streams. Broad and finely-gravelled roads with granite margins and massive stone lanterns intersect them, and their *torii* stone bridges, stone staircases, and stone-faced embankments are all on a grand scale and in perfect repair. Within the entrance are some plain buildings, one of which is occupied by several temple attendants dressed in white silk, whose business it is to sell the *o-harai* to all comers. Heavy curtains with the Mikado's crest upon them, draped over the entrance, may be taken as indicating that Shintô is under "State" patronage.

Passing through stately groves by a stately road, and under another stately *torii*, the visitor reaches the famous Gekû shrine but to be stricken by a pang of intense disappointment, for he is suddenly brought up by a great but utterly unimposing oblong enclosure of neatly planed wood—the upright posts, which are nine feet high, being planted at distances of six feet, and the intervals filled up with closely fitting and very heavy planking laid horizontally. The enclosure rests on a platform of broken stone raised on a stone embankment three feet high. It measures 247 by 339 feet. It has five entrances, four of which are always closed by solid gates, while the fifth is a *torii*, with a high wooden screen at a distance of seventy-six feet from it in front. Within the *torii* is a wooden gateway with a thatched roof, but a curtain with the Mikado's crest conceals all view of the interior court. It is in front of this gateway that the pilgrims from every part

of Japan throw down their copper coins upon a white cloth. Then they bow a few times, and depart satisfied.

Three courts with *torii* and thatched gateways are contained within this outer enclosure, the central one, an area 134 feet by 131, being surrounded by a very stout palisade. It must be observed that there is no access, except on the festival day, even into the first enclosure, but a good view is obtained from a bank on the west side. This innermost enclosure contains the *shōden* or shrine of the gods, a building thirty-four feet long by eighteen wide, mounted on a platform raised on posts six feet high. A balcony three feet wide runs round the building, and is covered by the eaves of the roof, which is finely thatched with bark to the depth of a foot. This *shōden*, like all else, is of planed wood, without ornament. It contains four boxes of unpainted wood, furnished with white handles and covered with what is said to be white silk. In each box is a mirror wrapped in a brocade bag. This is all, the kernel of the Shintō "Holy of Holies." These mirrors are never seen, and even the boxes which contain them are covered with curtains of coarse silk when the shrines are opened on festival days. Two treasures stand on the right and left of the *shōden*, and contain silken stuffs, silk fibre, and saddling for the sacred horses, which are usually albinos. The impression produced by a visit to Isé is akin to that made upon the minds of those who have made the deepest researches into Shinto—that there is nothing; and all things, even the stately avenues of the Gekū shrine, lead to—NOTHING! Glorious are the camphor groves of Isé, and bright the skies of Yamato; but no sunshine can light the awful melancholy of the unutterable emptiness of the holiest places of Shintō.

Having briefly traced Shintō from remote antiquity to the Isé shrines, its claims to be a religion and a "spiritual centre" remain to be as briefly considered. It must be remembered that Shintō has been for twelve centuries in close contact with Buddhism; and, corrupt and degenerate as Japanese Buddhism is, the lotus blossom in its temples still symbolizes righteousness; and the pictured torments of its many hells still assert that moral evil perpetuates itself beyond the grave. Christianity also, which promises to be an important element in the religious picture of Japan, has touched Shintō at many points during many years with its lofty teaching that "pure religion before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world." It does not appear, however, that either Buddhism or Christianity has, in an ethical sense, influenced the native faith. "Sin" is stated on high authority to be "the transgression of the law"



and "where no law is there is no transgression." Shintô has no law, and consequently no sin. It has no ethical code. Naotaore, its modern exponent and revivalist, emphatically states that "to have acquired the knowledge that there is no *michi* (ethics) to be practised and learned is really to have learned to practise the way of the gods." This lack of moral teaching makes it powerless as a religion, even among a people of such easy morals as the Japanese. Mr. Mori, the late enlightened Japanese minister to England, gives it as his opinion that "the leading idea of Shintô is a reverential feeling towards the dead." Kaempfer, one of the most painstaking and accurate of observers wrote thus, after elaborate investigations: "The whole system of Shintô is so mean and simple, that besides a heap of fabulous and romantic stories of their gods, demi-gods, and heroes, their divines have nothing wherewithal to satisfy the inquiries of curious persons about the nature and essences of their gods, about their power and government, about the future state of the soul, and such other essential points whereof other heathen systems are not altogether silent."

There is no teaching concerning a future state, no hell or purgatory for bad men, or heaven for good men. A vague assumption of the immortality of the soul arising out of a vague belief in the immortality of the gods, and a rude Valhalla of victories and feasting in the company of ancestors and heroes of the past, constitute the vague future of the Shintôist. Shintô has no worship properly so called, no sacrifices, no idol worship, and no priestcraft. The intervention of a priest is not ordinarily needed, for there are no specially merciless deities to propitiate, no terrors of hell to avert, and both sexes are capable of offering prayers. Such is the negative side. Its claim to be a religion rests almost solely on its deification of heroes, emperors, and great men, and of sundry forces and objects in nature; on its inculcating reverence for ancestors and imitation of their worthy deeds; and on its recognition of certain national ceremonial defilements and forms of purification.

The number of its deities is practically unlimited, or "eight millions," and includes heroes, rivers, mountains, waterfalls, and big trees. There are gods of all things—of learning, happiness, protection of human abodes, of harvest, of horse-shoes, of the gate, the well, the kitchen fireplace, and everything else to which superstitions of unknown origin are attached by the ignorant; but to none of these gods are high or noble qualities attributed, far less any of those which we regard as the "attributes" of deity. The best which can be said of the Shintô gods is that their worship has never been associated with bloody sacrifices or cruel or immoral rites. Of the gods of this vast Pantheon, many

are merely local divinities, but the worship of the gods of Isé, the "goddess of Food" and the "sun goddess" of the "Thousand-armed Kaanyon," the "goddess of Mercy," whose *cultus* was brought from China by the Buddhist propagandists; of Daikoku, the god of wealth; and of Binzuru, the medicine god, is universal in the empire. Binzuru, the medicine god, is usually a red lacquer figure of a man seated, and much defaced by the rubbings of centuries. To any specially celebrated image of Binzuru the afflicted make pilgrimages, rub the afflicted part of their own persons and the corresponding part of the god, and then rub themselves again. Daikoku is the prince of household gods. No family in Japan is without his image. This god, who leads all men, and possibly fools most, is represented as jolly and roguish-looking. He is short and stout, wears a cap like the cap of Liberty, is seated on rice-bags, holds a mallet in his right hand, and with his left clutches the mouth of a sack which he carries over his shoulder. All who have their living to make incessantly propitiate Daikoku; he is never without offerings and incense, and if there be a shadow of intensity in Shintô devotion, it is thrown into his worship.

Infallibility on the part of the head of a State, in virtue of his divine descent, was a convenient doctrine for political purposes in Japan, but cannot stand as an institution of government against the rapidly spreading tide of political ideas from Europe. I am almost inclined to speak of Shintô as the State religion in the past tense, for to-morrow the hundred and twenty-first Mikado will voluntarily abdicate his absolute sovereignty, the gift of the sun-goddess, and, in promulgating a constitution for the Japanese Empire, descend into the ranks of constitutional rulers. In this descent Shintô will receive its deathblow. As a religion, anyhow, it is nearly extinct. Western science has upset its cosmogony, and Western philosophy its mythology; it survives as a bundle of harmless superstitions, a fading folk-lore, fondly clung to as such by the unenlightened peasantry. Without a ritual, a moral code, or the rudest elements of a creed; with its lack of sensuousness, as well as of teachings regarding a future state, it never had power as a spiritual centre, and yielded easily to the ascendancy of Buddhism. It is hollow and empty, it has nothing in it to stir man's deepest nature. It appeals to no instincts of good or evil, and promises no definite destiny, and all attempts to resuscitate it, either as a bulwark against Christianity or as a substitute for Buddhism, must inevitably fail. In the words of a poet—

"It shall pass as a camp that is struck, as a tent that is gathered and gone,  
From the sands that were lamp-lit at eve, and at morning are level and lone."

These notes are the merest outline of Shintô, but the most elaborate treatise could do no more than successfully demonstrate its utter emptiness of all that to our ideas constitutes religion, and excite surprise that it should still retain even a nominal place among a people so quick-witted as the Japanese.

This easiest and least exacting of religions is vanishing away; and now—what will satisfy the spiritual cravings which Buddhism and Christianity have awakened, and who will mould the religious future of Japan? Will it be the ascetic and philosophic Sakya-muni, dead for two thousand years, and serene for ever in his golden shrine, offering a passionless nonentity as the goal of righteousness? or will it be Jesus the crucified Nazarene, holding in His pierced hands the gift of an immortality of unhindered and consecrated activities, the best hope of the weary ages—to whom, as the Crowned and Risen Christ, through centuries of slow and painful progress, all Christendom has bent the adoring knee, and who shall yet reign in righteousness, King of kings and Lord of lords?

## THE RELIGIONS OF JAPAN.

BY C. PFOUNDÉS (*late of Japan*).

(*Member Royal United Service Institution; Hon. Corresponding Member Geographical Society, Japan; Hon. Fell. Soc. Sc. Lit & Art, Lond.*)

THE religions of Japan present to the intelligent inquirer and industrious student an inexhaustible fund of valuable material, especially so to those engaged in ethical culture; and of the many interesting phases of Oriental thought, none will better repay the time and labour.

The lecturer's claim to treat upon this subject, is based on the fact of some years' residence in Japan, mostly in temples, during the most critical and momentous period of its modern history, and, with knowledge of the vernacular, he discussed such matters with intelligent natives and priests of various sects.

He was much impressed by the great amiability and innate courtesy of all classes, their high sense of duty and patriotism, and neighbourly good qualities, as well as the broadness and liberality with which all such subjects were discussed, having regard to the feelings of others, even when dissenting from them in opinion.

The geographical position of the group of islands forming the Japanese Empire is an important factor in its condition of intellectual and religious thought and development, and the unique stability of its chief political institutions is another element of moment.

Learned persons have been in all times most welcome in Japan; and the gifted natives who travelled far and wide returned with vast stores of knowledge. To understand the religious life of a nation, the alien, not always welcome, must get at the inner life, achieve the entire confidence, learn the language and modes of thought and the sources from which they are derived. The reticence of the natives—not to be surprised at, their confidences having been so often, alas! betrayed—has precluded exhaustive information being afforded to all comers.

For a lucid and concise exposition, it may be well to deal with the questions chronologically, so far as the annals of Japan,

confirmed by other sources of knowledge, aid us for the earlier periods.

It is perhaps most convenient to divide the subject into indigenous and alien cults ; but they are so very closely interwoven that it is not easy to separate so complicated, though not at all homogenous, a whole.

The most important section will be dealt with by another lecturer, who will speak on Shintôism—so that will not be trespassed upon further than is absolutely essential.

The origin of a people, or at least the sources whence they derived their radical religious ideas, and, if possible, also the eras when such were received, will necessarily have to be entered upon.

Japan may have been peopled from several widely separated sources, from north to south. It certainly has been visited by ancient scholars from far-distant parts of the continent.

The survivals of natural religion yet to be found are highly interesting to the more advanced student ; but it is the first development of the ethical ideals, through superstitions, religions, and philosophy, that chiefly concerns us.

About the time of the early days of Rome, a highly intellectual race appeared on the arena of Japanese history ; and the first few centuries appear to have been fully occupied in reducing the very barbarous autochones to something like peaceful order ; and teaching the primitive arts. Since then, in unbroken descent, we have had, unique in history, a long line of rulers, the present being the hundred and twenty-third in the course of the twenty-five and a half centuries ; and Japan's is the oldest imperial dynasty existent, chief of the civil and religious life of the empire : and on this the national cultus is founded. Spiritual activity is therefore very ancient, and is undoubtedly the development of far earlier teaching.

Chinese and Indian literature, philosophy, metaphysics, and science were introduced, and are to Japan what Greek and Latin classics are to ourselves.

The classics, of which Confucius is the best-known collator and editor, the philosophy of the Taoists, and later the Indian, followed by Buddhism, entered into Japanese education, and influenced thought and conduct.

In passing through China, Indian dogma became materially leavened, so that we shall find many sects in Japan, but all quite as harmonious as, and quarrelling no more than do, sectarians nearer home. There are more than a dozen sects of Buddhism now in Japan, several of which have numerous sub-sects.

The Chinese and Indians who arrived from time to time in

Japan, as well as the Japanese who returned from India, China, etc., founded many distinct sects, and taught much that diverged, sometimes conflicting with the transcendental Buddhism of Aryavata.

Buddhism was resisted strenuously for a long time at first by the custodians of the shrines of the indigenous cultus ; and it was not till the fifth century, a thousand years after the Budha, Gautama Shakya Muni, that it obtained a foothold. One of the imperial family took up the cause, like Asoka of India, and became the "Constantine" of Japanese religion.

Whatever Christianity may or may not owe to earlier Buddhism, there can be little doubt that later Buddhism contains elements of Christianity as of other beliefs.

From time to time efforts were made, more or less successful, to revive the pure *Shintô*, or *Kami no Michi*, divine way, or spiritual doctrine ; and this must have greatly influenced Buddhism, and enforced some reform within itself, and purified it of the demoralizing influences a sacerdotal class always permits to flourish. The growth of power of a theocracy here, as in all time, had its evils ; and Buddhism is no exception in history.

The various sects that arose each based their doctrine on some special portions of the great body of teaching as received from India, leavened and modified by Chinese and Japanese philosophies and modes of thought.

The original eight sects, some offshoots from those established in China during the preceding centuries, grew into others. Some flourished ; others declined or were absorbed in newer, stronger movements.

It must be remembered that Buddhism was a successful revolt against Brahmanical domination and monopolizing of sacred offices and high-caste exclusive privileges.

Some of the sects taught that good works and the acquisition of "merit" were all essential to salvation ; others impressed—and still do so—the efficacy of continued repetition of exclamatory invocation or recitation of some ritual. Some work themselves up to a point of religious ecstasy, just like more or less ignorant and bigoted enthusiastic fanatics much nearer home to-day.

The intonation of prayers, with accompaniment of bell, or gong, or drum, was one of the disadvantages of residence in temple buildings ; but one got used to it, like other matters, in time by the exercise of a little patience and philosophy, until at last the monotonous, yet not always unmusical, certainly generally rhythmical, sounds became positively somniferous.

Just a few words by way of comparison as to the contrasts between the fundamental points of Christianity and the prevailing

beliefs of the far East, in all courtesy and respect for the feelings of professing Christians.

The Redemption, the basis of Christianity, finds no place, no parallel; indeed, so far from sympathy, it is received with abhorrence by the great majority of natives, the educated especially, however carefully the feeling may be suppressed in the company of missionaries and foreigners avowedly enthusiastic Christians. The idea of the Deity lampooned by Bobbie Burns, in his satire on the "Elect," finds no place in the religious conception of the natives of the extreme Orient. Sacrifice, much less propitiatory sacrifice of such awful character, and *the* Sacrament of the Church, was an incredible mystery. Its necessity could not be understood by those who were asked to accept as a God of love a deity that permitted, much less demanded, the perpetuation of such a doctrine.

The justice, too, of a priesthood being competent to remit sins at the last moment, and place the most wicked on the same level with the most virtuous, is another *difficulty*. That sin should be forgiven under such conditions, is viewed as a direct incentive to wrong-doing, if it can be finally cancelled whenever it suits the wicked one to become good.

Budhism is much discussed nowadays; but it is greatly misunderstood, often, I fear, wilfully misstated. To take any one local or sectarian phase and the less admirable features of this as representing the general and fundamental principles is, intentional or not, too often the *suggestio falsi* as well as the *suppressio veri*, if not worse even.

Budhism teaches that mankind should work out each for themselves their own salvation, and rectify the ills caused by fellow-mortals by reasonable human effort.

Superhuman or supernatural aids for the present or for the hereafter appear necessary in the teachings of certain sects whose dogma is of later development, derived from other than pure Budhistic sources.

To those who seek a personal salvation, by merit or otherwise, this is not altogether denied; but to those who attain to the higher ideals something far higher, much less selfish, more noble, is offered. Amongst the educated classes formal prayers and religious observance are less general than amongst the illiterate.

An illustration, one of a series of caricatures, represents an old woman reckoning upon her abacus, in front of a gilt image, her good and evil deeds from the entries in a book open in the lap of the idol.

Some of the Japanese with whom I have talked, quite agree with those Roman Catholics who do not deem the Bible, in its

entirety quite the most fitting book for general family reading, especially, for the young of either sex to pick out certain passages that in any other book would be deemed most highly objectionable; and think that those who criticize Oriental books, and animadvert on their indecency, should look nearer home first.

The inexperienced, partially educated, young missionary does not appeal with very great effect (often very much wanting in tact) to the educated and subtle-minded natives. Even all but the most illiterate are astute enough to see the propagandist is not well informed on general subjects, and usually narrow-minded. Besides, the general method of attacking the native faith and ideas, before becoming thoroughly acquainted with what is attacked, displays more than mere want of judgment, and vitiates the efforts. The native knows the missionary is a paid agent, another vital flaw.

After the visit of Xavier (the pupil of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits), the propagandists of Rome had a short but not very brilliant period of success. In consequence of the priests meddling in politics, and something more than mere suspicion of a desire to reduce Japan to a dependency of Rome, or some Roman Catholic European state, the priests were given notice to quit; but they incited the converts to open rebellion, and forced their way secretly amongst the natives. Rigorous and yet more severe edicts were issued, stringent measures taken, and still the priests persevered, till extreme measures appeared to be the only means to preserve authority, peace, and national independence. The country was closed to the turbulent priests and the truculent Spaniard and other European traders and adventurers. Peace was restored, and it appears to have been maintained. Prosperity permitted the arts and letters to flourish for more than two centuries. California became settled, China partially opened to Western commerce. Merchant shipping whalers began to frequent the Japan seas, shipwrecks occurred, and in time it was deemed expedient to force Japan to open its ports. The thin edge inserted, subsequent events culminated in treaties being forced upon the Japanese, under the guns of ships of war.

The country has been subjected to a great political and social revolution, in the thirty years that have elapsed since the revival (enforced), of intercourse with the outer world. Japanese have travelled and been educated; and now missionary societies, Christian associations, etc., are sending their missionaries to Japan in numbers. The Japanese receive these, doubtless, chiefly on account of the material advantage of numerous instructors chiefly in primary education, submitting to the propaganda tacitly for the sake of the economy.



Some years ago another sweeping measure resulted in the complete separation of Shintô shrines and Buddhist temples and the sequestration of the revenues, the vested interests of those in office being compounded with for pecuniary considerations.

Buddhism and other faiths are now almost completely at the mercy of the people. The sombreness of our smug self-righteous religionists, Sabbatarians, etc., has little parallel in Japanese religion. Tolerant of the ideas and respecting the feelings of others, the Japanese deny to others the right to dictate to them or force theological dogma upon them unsolicited. In Japan it is quite common to find the members of one household professing various creeds, some of the males Shintôists purely, others of either sex professing different sectarian Buddhist creeds. Even a priest of some of the sects that permit marriage may have as a partner one of a different sect, though this is not very general.

Dispassionate inquiry into all phases of religious philosophies and science is a national characteristic, almost a mania.

The duties of the present, of this life rather than of a future unrevealed, are urged; and the cruder, coarser ideas of many Western religious sects are entirely absent.

The observance of Shintô rites, festivals, etc., is almost universal, yet does not clash with the fulfilling of Buddhist ceremonials on many occasions during life, whether it is from conviction, or, as is so often the case, "just to make things pleasant all round in the family circle, and in a neighbourly way;" yet the conventionalities and amenities are carried out and respected carefully.

As several of the lectures in this course treat of Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, etc., these have only been briefly alluded to on this occasion; and it is a great advantage that this is so, as it clears the ground for a lucid conception of this very complicated subject. The esoteric Buddhism of Japan is not at all that of recent exponents and writers. Occultism and charlatanism generally have been rigorously suppressed by the very sensible rulers of old Japan in all time, out of regard for the highest interests of the people.

Time does not permit of entering into the general and minute details of observance and dogma; but for an audience of students of ethical culture, the salient points have been chosen to deal with so far as time permits.

The ideal of duty in this life was a very high and noble one. The materialism and scepticism of China were leavened by the spirituality of India, and the innate artistic instincts and amiable characteristics of the people led them to work out the national idiosyncrasies.

Right valiantly have the Japanese grappled with great problems. Heroic efforts have been made in the present and the past to solve the social and political questions that agitate ourselves. These astute and æsthetic people are far more alive to mental culture and its great ethical value than we can claim to be, much though it may cost our self-conceit to admit it. They know more of us than we know of them; and could we but bring ourselves to see our own social condition as these Easterns see it, the lesson would be worth our while.

In conclusion, these are some of the practical lessons:—

Toleration; respect for the feelings of others; recognition of every one's right to think for themselves; outward conformity to that which is held in public veneration.

Unprejudiced, dispassionate inquiry into all things physical and psychological; no blind faith, but desire for knowledge as a basis, rather than leaning on the judgment of others probably no more capable of judgment.

Sturdy independence of thought, within the limits of non-interference with the freedom and rights of others.

Refraining from forcing dogmatic opinion unwelcome, merely as a personal selfish desire to acquire merit, or from aggressively self-assertive conceit.

Absence of that over-eager desire of personal salvation, even if gained at the expense of others, so common amongst the smug self-righteous of our own land and age.

Recognition of responsibilities and duties, and that there is a loyalty due to the inferior by the superior, reciprocal, not one-sided, as with us.

Refusal to believe in much that is forced upon us by a professional, mercenary religious class, tainted with suspicion of being put forward to support their otherwise untenable claims.

Knowledge that much of the observance of religions we know of, is but the survival of ancient rites, some having an origin that would horrify the orthodox if explained.

A high sense of the dignity of humanity, and that each one should feel this and act accordingly.

Charity to the deserving; kindness and gentleness to the feeble; protection to the oppressed; justice to all.

Unselfish purity in all things,—in thought, speech, deed.

These are some of the lessons to be gleaned from the far East.

[N.B.—The lecture was illustrated with native coloured drawings, brought from Japan by the lecturer; and by maps kindly lent by R. Bingham, Esq., of Messrs. W. & A. K. Johnson, for this and other lectures at South Place, etc]

## HINDUISM.

BY SIR ALFRED C. LYALL, K.C.B.

THE religion of the one hundred and fifty millions of India is a very widespread subject, and one which divides itself into many branches. Speaking more restrictedly, Hinduism is the religion of those who believe in the Brahminic gods, in certain rules of caste and rituals, and who seek the aid of the Brahmins in all essential rites, especially those connected with birth, death, and marriage. The first thing to understand about the religion is, that it is not a historical religion.

In Buddhism and Christianity we should find an account of the origin, growth and development of those religions more or less authentically recorded. Hinduism has no founder, no distinct creeds, and no historical order of development. It is indigenous in the country in which it is now found. India is one of those countries where great religions have spread to neighbouring countries; but it has received no corresponding influx from the rest of the world. The Mohammedan invaders acquired India politically, but, unlike the case of other countries, where they converted the conquered, the work of proselytizing was very partially carried out in India. The religion thus stands rooted in the soil in which it found itself. It is the best specimen now surviving of a *natural* religion. The whole population of the world was, before historic religions began, in the same condition.

By surveying India we can best see the state of the primitive world. Instead of a religion of creeds they view a religious "chaos"—a religion which is driven to and fro by credulity, and which has the most unvarnished idolatry combined with philosophy.

The Hindoos, although the name denotes inhabitants of India, are not necessarily people of Indian birth; the word now means those who belong to the Hindoo religion, although they have not, as have the Mohammedan and Christian, a uniform creed. They are, however, speaking generally, united, and split up only in regard to minor rites, which are addressed to an immense number of gods. The religion has two meanings—one for the crowd, and another for the initiated. The belief of the latter

is founded on Pantheism, viz. the doctrine that all nature is a manifestation of God; and this is accepted by all intelligent Hindoos. Yet these deem the whole material world to be an illusion.

The laws of caste are settled and expounded by the Brahmins. There are four castes: (1) The Brahmin or priestly; (2) the warriors; (3) merchants; and (4) the *Sutras*. These four divisions are found in their sacred literature; but in practical life only one of them exists, the Brahmins, whose presence is indispensable at marriages and at other religious ceremonies, and who expound the Hindoo Scriptures; the rest of the population is divided into a multitude of castes, tribes, and sects. Their *Vedas* are books of great antiquity. They contain rules of ritual and worship and mystic doctrine.

The divinities worshipped by the Hindoos include three supreme gods, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, and in connection with them a host of *minor deities*, amounting, according to some, to three hundred millions. Nothing like this number is, however, worshipped, but still the number is enormous. Of Brahma there is little to say. He is a "self-existent creator," and is supposed to be the original creative intelligence which "brought the universe out of nothing." But his influence is too remote, and his functions are too vague, to impress the popular imagination. Consequently he has very few worshippers, the majority being worshippers of Vishnu and Siva. Vishnu is the supreme preserver. When in repose he sheds forth the eternal spirit. Unlike Brahma he can be awakened by the earnest prayers of men to set things right on earth at critical times. The most celebrated embodiments of him are Krishna and Rama. He also passed into the bodies of animals. It may seem inconsistent that this great god assumed the form at one time of a tortoise, and at another of a great man. The idea, however, running through all these embodiments is Pantheism; the divine spirit is all-pervading. The Brahmins have reasons for recognizing the appearance of Vishnu in animal forms. A neighbouring hill tribe worshipped the boar; on their becoming Hindoos they were told that they had really been worshipping Vishnu unawares. Siva represents a different principle. He has charge of the whole circle of animated existence, especially births and deaths. He is not known by embodiments like Vishnu, but by "destruction and reproduction." The plagues, the diseases, small-pox, and cholera, are his. The ordinary crowd of worshippers endeavour to propitiate his terrible power. Thousands of animals are sacrificed in his temples, and it is believed human sacrifices would not displease him.

Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva form the great triad. The deities

have an inner and an outer meaning, representing the principles connecting the higher intelligence with the lower beliefs. The popular fancies are in the foreground, and the philosophy on the subject in the background. The simple people believe there are gods everywhere. There are local gods of fortune, war, etc.; and there is also the worship of the sun, moon, rain and wind, thinly disguised by the names of divinities. A numerous army of saints and martyrs are also believed in; these have been deified, and produce a deep impression on the mind of the people.

The process of deifying famous men has been almost universal amongst ancient nations and superstitious people. Nearly every god has been some man famous in his lifetime on earth, worshipped at death, and at last promoted to the full honours of divinity. The worship of the dead is general among all races of India. The tragedy of a painful life and the mystery of death seem to account for the origin of a great number of these deities. All this religion is constantly undergoing change, and the religion is still spreading. These transitions have been going on for centuries, and the primitive beliefs have ever been slipping, like "an everlasting shore," into the vast ocean of Brahminism. The worship of these gods is mostly of a *propitiatory* kind, to avert their wrath or obtain their help in temporal difficulties.

There is believed to be a transmigration of the soul through the bodies of animals, till at last it is absorbed into the Supreme Spirit. Freedom of the soul from the body, freedom from sensation, is the highest object of the Hindoo. This can only be accomplished by the soul's passage through a kind of labyrinth of existence. The law of transmigration not only applies to mortals, but to the gods also. Successive births are like awakenings from sleep, the difference between them and sleep being that when born into a fresh existence, we have no memory of our former life.

The higher theology teaches that forms and ceremonies have no potency for spiritual illumination. One characteristic of Hinduism is the vast difference which separates the higher from the lower orders of religious thought; the lofty speculation on the one hand from the polytheism on the other. Such difference still exists. It is not by any means certain that our men of science of to-day have come to a very different conclusion from that of the Brahmins, though it may be dressed in different terms; because the secret of Brahminism, as of modern science, is evolution.

Many of the Hindoo sacred books are full of virtuous counsels, extolling justice, self-restraint and morality generally, although there is nothing like such a strict injunction of righteousness as in Christianity; no holding up the glory of dying for the pro-

pagation of the truth, as in Mohammedanism. Nevertheless, there is some practical morality, as when the Hindoo attributes any disaster that may befall him to some sin committed in a former state of existence.

There can be little doubt that the whole system of worship of the gods is likely to break up before the influx of knowledge. If we can prove that "life is worth living," it will be done, for the Hindoos at present believe the converse; and their pessimistic notions—founded upon long experience of bad climates, bad governments, misrule and misfortune—may alter with a change for the better of some of their conditions of existence. Meanwhile they are passing through a curious stage of intellectual and religious transition; and it remains to be seen whether their religious development will be greatly assisted by the exchange of their old lamps for new ones.

OLD INDIAN POETRY AND RELIGIOUS  
THOUGHT.<sup>1</sup>

BY MRS FREDERIKA MACDONALD.

SIR GEORGE BIRDWOOD, in his important work on the Industrial Arts of India, has said that no one can properly understand Indian art who has not learned from the study of old Indian poetry something about the myths, traditions, and beliefs that this art embodies and illustrates. He goes farther than this. He says that people do not understand the customs, and ways of thinking and feeling, of the modern Hindu population unless they have some familiarity with the sacred poetry, that is still the influence lending colour, variety, and animation to the lives of the great mass of the people of India.

Now I am going to ask you to apply this statement to the study of Indian religion. In my lecture on Buddhism, I said that Students who are pleased to follow the modern method, and who commence their study of Indian religious thought with Buddhism, are actually beginning to read a large volume at the closing chapters. Buddhism is the highest and most perfect development of a system of ideas and beliefs that are different from the ideas and beliefs that form the groundwork of Western religious systems. And, therefore, the Western student cannot easily appreciate these ideas in their latest development, unless he has made himself familiar with them in the earlier and simpler stages of their growth. In other words, he does not understand the philosophy of Indian religion, unless he has penetrated to, and been to some extent penetrated by, the Indian religious sentiment.

The home of the Indian religious sentiment, and the place where it may be familiarly studied, is in those two Poems, or storehouses of poetry, that may rightly be described as the sources of the imaginative life of India. I am speaking of the *Ramāyan* and the *Mahābhārat*. I need not trouble you now

<sup>1</sup> This lecture, given at South Place Institute, Finsbury, was published in the *Woman's World* for June, 1889.—It is reprinted here by kind permission of Messrs. Cassell.

with the different opinions of various authors upon the actual antiquity and positive historical worth of the *Ramāyan* and *Mahābhārat*; because we are not at present attempting to establish the relation which this sacred poetry has to the early history of India: we are endeavouring to see it as the home of the Indian religious sentiment, and the birthplace of that higher idealism that has its noblest expression in Buddhism. But I may say, in passing, that it is now as difficult to establish the actual date of the *Ramāyan* and *Mahābhārat*, as to give their true authorship. No doubt the original thread of tradition that has supplied the central stories of the *Ramāyan* and *Mahābhārat* may be traced back to a very remote period, to eighteen hundred or two thousand years B.C.; a time when the Aryan settlers in India found themselves brought into frequent conflict with the barbarous indigenous tribes—whom we find spoken of in these Poems as “*Asuras*,” or “*Rakshasas*”—i.e. demons; or else, with more condescension, but even less respect, as “wild men of the woods”—in other words, a race of intelligent monkeys. But this thread of early tradition has to-day become overlaid and over-clustered with later traditions, superstitious fancies, and sentimental romances. And we can readily understand how this has come about, when we remember that these great Poems have been preserved to the people of India, from generation to generation, and from age to age, not by the aid of priests and sages, kept in check by the authority of sacred volumes, but mainly by the free gifts of memory and imagination of the professional Poets and Story-tellers, who, from the most remote times, have wandered about India, as they still wander, from town to town and village to village, reciting and relating these cherished legends and traditions that are a part of the national life. So that the *Ramāyan* and *Mahābhārat* exist to-day, not as the creation of one Poet nor of several poets, nor are they even the poetical record of one age. They are the comprehensive record of the imaginative life of India, expanding under the social, political, and religious influences of ages, whose precise and literal history is lost to us.

And it is in this record of the imaginative life of India that we find the traditions, convictions, and sentiments that every Indian Philosopher and Prophet had to count with, and, to some extent, to adapt and utilize, as the medium for conveying his spiritual lessons to the multitude. But even this is not all. These Indian Prophets and Philosophers were not themselves independent of the influences amidst which they were reared. It was in this atmosphere, saturated with the sentiments and traditions of ancient India, that their abstruse speculations and



profound meditations were carried on. In other words, they too were children of the Ramāyan and Mahābhārat: and it is quite easy to trace this parentage, and the influence of the old Indian sentimental temper, even in the intellectual religion of Buddha, or in the mystical pantheism of the Vedānta philosophy.

But this is just what is lost sight of by the uninitiated student, who starts off in life with the study of Buddhism and the higher schools of Brahman philosophy. And here we have, I think, the explanation of the astonishing difficulties these students assure us lie in the way of a proper understanding of Indian philosophical and religious thought—difficulties that they declare can only be elucidated by “esoteric” methods; and by the assistance of “psychological telegrams” sent from the Mahatmas in Tibet to the Theosophical Society in Pall Mall.

But it will be admitted, I think, that there is some inherent probability that a safer clue to the meaning of Indian religious thought may be found through the study of the conditions of sentiment and belief amidst which these higher phases of thought arose. And I shall presently hope to prove to you that even the serious student of the spiritual religions of India will not lose his time, and may possibly derive many advantages, if he will consent to pass a season of preparation in what Heine has called so well the “immense Flowering Forests of old Indian poetry.” What is more, I shall hope to show you that the modern idealist may find in this old story-world some strange resemblances to the sentiments and enthusiasms that he is wont to describe as the peculiar characteristics of the “Modern Spirit.”

Now these resemblances do not lie upon the surface. The first impression made upon the Western reader by old Indian poetry is the impression that he has entered upon a strange world; a world of marvels and miracles, where common sense and common experience are entirely neglected, and where nothing is more unusual than to come upon any incident that lies within the bounds of possibility. But this is only the first impression. Let the explorer penetrate deep enough into these immense “Flowering Forests,” and very soon he discovers the charm that puts him in possession of the secret of the place, and enables him to count at its true worth this fantastic play of an imagination that is never enslaved by the dreams of its own creation. The true explanation of the miraculous atmosphere that pervades old Indian poetry is to be found, not in the Indian Poet’s superstition or credulity, but rather in his incredulity—his inability to take very seriously the mere show of things that is made to pass before the Soul for its instruction and entertainment.

Where all the outer life is regarded as Maya, Illusion, a dream,

and a vision, there can be no objection felt to some incidents of the dream being incredible and extraordinary. And when this discovery is once made, the modern idealist will find himself far more at home in the spiritual atmosphere of old Indian poetry than he is in the spiritual atmosphere of the Romance Country, that is so much nearer to him in point of time, but that is haunted by the mediæval religious sentiment. I think, if the truth is told, it must be admitted that the modern idealist is not at all at home in the mediæval Romance Country. The mystical aspiration after superhuman beauty and supernatural delight that is the animating enthusiasm of mediæval poetry and art has its other side, in a contempt for Nature, and the natural life of man, that jars upon the modern sentimental temper. You have this disdain, and even disgust, for common Nature expressed in the effort to attain an ideal type of beauty as little natural as possible; a type where human mind and will, as well as human body and passion, are attenuated, and as far as possible effaced, lost in celestial meekness and self-abandonment. Now to satisfy the modern conception of beauty, will, mind, and a noble self-possessing energy need to be expressed. Then you have this disdain and disgust expressed also in mediæval comedy; in the choice of natural human love as a favourite theme for gross jesting; and especially in the mediæval delight in the grotesque representation of the dominion of Death over the body, in the grim humour of pictures of dancing skeletons and grinning death's heads, in the constant legend of the worm, corruption, crawling over the fair flower of life.

In old Indian poetry you have nothing of all this, that the modern imagination feels so morbid. Nothing, indeed, is more characteristic of the Indian Poet than his failure when he attempts to deal with supernatural terrors or morbid horrors. He has his demons, as we have seen; his Asuras, Rakshasas, and others; but it is amusing to observe his inability to deal with them as *bonâ-fide* demons. The demons of Indian poetry generally become praiseworthy characters at the close of their career, and die in the odour of sanctity. Ravana, for instance, the King of the Rakshasas, the Demon of the Ramāyan, dies a valorous death; and the perfect hero, Rama, pronounces a complimentary speech over his funeral pyre. Then, in Indian poetry you have a great love of the grotesque: but the Indian grotesque has nothing morbid about it; it deals with life, not with death; and means only an extreme pleasure in the quaint and humorous aspects of Nature. The mysticism of old Indian poetry, too, is the mysticism of pantheism—a mysticism that does not see in Nature the enemy of the Soul, but that sees all visible Nature as the dream of the

universal Soul or Mind that is the one true existence. And the dreamer has no disgust for his dream, but only tenderness and compassion. He takes pleasure in his dream, in its admirable and beautiful features, only the pleasure is tinged with melancholy, because he feels that—even whilst he is watching it—the dream is vanishing away.

And here you have the first point of resemblance between the Indian and the modern sentimental tempers—in a certain enthusiasm of compassion, that touches with pathos, and even with sublimity, the common face of Nature and of man—looking at all common things from a visionary's standpoint: a visionary, free from supernatural terror but never entirely free from the world's sorrow; from the consciousness of age waiting upon youth, of fatigue following after pleasure, of love ending in loss, and life vanishing in death. And then, amidst the mingled reverence and compassion of this sentimental temper, you have the *awakenings* of the higher spiritual temper, that has its finest expression in Buddhism, and its counterpart in what the modern idealist describes as the "cosmic emotion;" the effort to set life's purposes and hopes beyond the personal state, the endeavour to "make the mind its own state," by training it to take its stand by the facts of thought and intellect; and the attempt to liberate the Soul from the painful sense of the impermanency and imperfection of material conditions, not by encouraging it to hope for a change of these external conditions, but by urging it to the conquest of spiritual disinterestedness.

Now, the only means of proving to you that these are the essential qualities of old Indian poetry will be to send you to the *Ramāyan* and *Mahābhārat*; and all that I can do now is to direct your attention to some stories, here and there, that may illustrate these qualities, and prove to you that they do not exist merely in my own imagination. The stories themselves you will, of course, expect to find Eastern, and of the old world. It is the sentiment these stories express that I am supposing you will find more in harmony with modern feeling than the sentiment that pervades mediæval Romance.

The first story I have chosen from the *Mahābhārat*, is a curious example of the exactly opposite sentiments that inspire Indian and mediæval legends. I need not remind you of the beautiful story of the perfect knight Sir Galahad, and of many other stories of sinless knights and holy maidens, who are made indifferent to earthly love by the vision of celestial beauty? In the Indian story you have the opposite of this—you have the ideal maiden rendered indifferent to celestial beauty by the vision of human sorrow.

Once upon a time, then—to begin my story in good old orthodox

fashion—there was a young Rajah, named Nala, who was famous throughout all India for his good looks, kind heart, and many accomplishments. In a neighbouring country to Rajah Nala's, reigned another Rajah, who had a daughter of astonishing goodness and beauty. Now Rajah Nala had heard so much of the beauty of Rajah Bhima's daughter, that he fell deeply in love with her—although, of course, he had never seen her—and so much in love was he that he gave up all his studies and favourite amusements, and spent the leisure that the affairs of state left him in wandering to and fro in a solitary and shady grove near his palace; meditating upon the beautiful young princess, and repeating her name over and over again with all manner of endearing epithets. Now the name of Rajah Bhima's daughter was Damayanti. One day when the young Rajah was wandering thus in his favourite grove, a flock of swans flew by him, and Rajah Nala, stretching forth his hand carelessly, caught one of the beautiful birds. Then the swan said to him: "Rajah Nala, do let me go; and I will carry a message for you to the maiden whom you love."

"Who is the maiden I love, you foolish swan?" asked the Rajah.

And the swan replied: "I had need be foolish, indeed, if I did not know that! My home is in this wood; and do I not hear you every day murmur over and over, in the most tiresome fashion, the name of the Princess Damayanti?"

Then Rajah Nala was a little confused. But he was pleased, on the whole, with the swan's proposal, and he began a very long message; but the swan stopped him in the midst of it saying: "Hush! I should never remember all that. Better leave the message to me, and be sure I will plead your cause well with the Princess."

So Rajah Nala consented; he opened his hand, and the swan flew away, straight off in the direction of the country ruled over by Rajah Bhima.

Next day the Princess Damayanti was playing at ball in the garden of her father's palace, with the young maidens who were her companions. Presently, over the garden wall flew a flock of beautiful swans, and began to flutter about in the garden, as though to tempt the young girls to run after them. And so they all did, with cries of delight; but nobody caught a swan except Damayanti, who flung her arms round the most beautiful bird of all the flock.

The swan pretended to be in a great fright, and cried out: "Oh let me go, do let me go, Princess Damayanti! And I will tell you the name of the handsomest young rajah in the whole world, who is pining away for love of you."

Then the princess said: "What nonsense you talk, you foolish swan! I have never left my father's palace; how then should any young rajah be pining for love of me?"

"The fame of your beauty, Damayanti, has flown abroad like a messenger of love, and it has so moved the heart of the young Rajah Nala that he does nothing but sigh forth your name day and night."

The Princess asked: "And what sort of prince is this Rajah Nala; you foolish swan?"

And the swan answered: "No such prince has ever ruled in all India! He is beloved everywhere, amongst great and small; and amongst his own subjects he is known by the name of 'The Protector of the Poor.' In fact, so noble a man is Nala, that only the noblest and most beautiful of princesses is worthy to espouse him; and my reason for coming here to-day was to see whether the Princess Damayanti was deserving of the love he gives her."

Then Damayanti asked, anxiously: "And what do you think now, good swan? Am I worthy of the love of the noble Nala?"

"Yes," the swan answered. "You alone of all the maidens in the land of India, are worthy of him."

"Well, if you think that," said Damayanti, releasing the swan, "do fly back at once to Nala and tell him so."

Now, after this conversation with the swan, a great change took place in the young Princess Damayanti. She was no longer as merry as she had once been; she wearied of her favourite games; she would not even eat the nicest sweetmeats; and her old nurse reported that she was restless in her sleep. Rajah Bhima, who was devotedly fond of his daughter, grew very anxious. But the Ranee, Damayanti's mother, said that was no cause for uneasiness, only that it was now time enough for the young princess to celebrate her *swayamvara*.

The *swayamvara* was the festival given by any Indian chief who had a daughter arrived at marriageable age. The young chieftains who felt disposed to aspire to the hand of the princess were invited to attend this festival; and there were games of skill to show off the suitors' strength and courage; and then, at the end of the festival, the princess herself was called upon to choose a bridegroom for herself amongst her suitors. You see by this that in the old Hindu world, there were none of those modern arbitrary marriage customs that make the daughter her father's chattel, to be disposed of in childhood without any question as to her own feelings and inclinations; and you will find too, by the study of the old sacred poetry of India that the position of women was comparatively independent and dignified in these ages, and

up to the period of the Mahommedan conquest of India. A great deal is said, of course, about the absolute devotion and obedience a woman owes her husband; but I don't think the Indian Poets insist upon this matter any more than St. Paul does. And, in any case, we find that the women in the *Ramāyan* and *Mahābhārat* were rather true and devoted than abjectly submissive wives. There is nothing said about the seclusion of women; or about their being forbidden to go about unveiled; or about their being shut out from the business and pleasure of life, by the rule, of Mahommedan origin, that a married woman must never see any man but her husband.

But this is a digression: the *Ramāyan* and *Mahābhārat* are interesting from a hundred different points of view: but it would take up too much time, and would be turning aside from the point of view we have chosen, if I were to dwell now upon the many interesting disclosures of the prevailing social customs and ideas of ancient India, that are given even in these episodes we are now considering. Those of you, however, who are interested in the matter, might read Sir Monier Williams's valuable work on old Indian Poetry.

So now let us return to the *swayamvara* of the Princess Damayanti. Rajah Bhima sent out his heralds far and near, to proclaim the festival, and to invite all the eligible young rajahs to attend. Of course, Rajah Nala heard the news, and ordered his chariot forthwith, and started off full of hope and expectation: for the swan had safely brought him back Damayanti's message. The fame of Damayanti's beauty was so great, and also the Rajah Bhima's wealth and power were so well known, that there was a sound of chariot-wheels throughout all the land of India: so many young rajahs were there, hastening from north, south, east, and west, to the *swayamvara* of Damayanti.

Now the noise made by all these chariots, travelling in one direction, mounted up to Swarga, the heavenly mountain, where the Sky God, Indra, dwelt with the other Gods—Agni, lord of fire; Varun, lord of waters; and Yama, god of death.

Indra's curiosity was excited by all this noise, so he sent the 'Gods' messenger Naruda, the Indian Mercury, to see what could be happening on the earth. Naruda came back with the news that all this commotion was caused by the fact that the most beautiful young princess in the world was giving her *swayamvara*. When Indra heard this he rose from his throne, and calling to Agni, Varun, and Yama, he suggested that they too should go to the *swayamvara*, and present themselves amongst Damayanti's suitors. So, the other Gods consenting, their cloud chariots were called; and Indra, Agni, Varun, and Yama, started for the earth.

Now it happened that just when the Gods dismounted from their cloud chariots, Rajah Nala was passing by. So Indra called to Nala, and Nala approached the gods with due reverence.

And Indra said to Nala: "Hold, Rajah Nala, we, the Gods, know you for a religious man, who always pays the Gods the honour due to them. Now, therefore, we have chosen you to be our messenger."

Then Nala raised his hands to his head in salutation; and asked the Gods what message he was to carry, and to whom.

"You are to go at once to the Princess Damayanti," Indra said; "and to tell her that we, the four Gods—Indra, Varun, Agni, and Yama—having heard that her great beauty makes her worthy to be the bride of an Immortal, are going to present ourselves at her *swayamvara* as suitors for her hand. And you must tell her that we will reveal ourselves to her by indisputable signs, so that she may not make the fatal error of choosing a mortal bridegroom."

Then Rajah Nala trembled violently; and he fell upon his knees; and entreated Indra not to send him on this errand.

"O Indra," he said; "I, too, love Damayanti; and even when you met me, I was hurrying to her *swayamvara*."

But Indra only laughed scornfully and said: "Well, Rajah Nala you are a well-looking young prince enough; but I suppose you do not set yourself up as a rival to the Immortals? There was no presumption in your putting yourself forward as Damayanti's suitor: but now that you know that you have Indra, Agni, Varun, and Yama, to compete with, do you think you have any chance of success? Besides, all that does not matter: mortals have no business to consult their own feeling before obeying the orders of the Gods; and we order you to take our message to the lovely Princess Damayanti forthwith."

"But how can I do this, Indra?" Nala asked. "You know that the Princess Damayanti is safely guarded in her father's palace. Do you think that Rajah Bhima's gatekeepers would admit me, a strange man, to the young maiden's presence?"

"That need be no difficulty for you," said Indra; "by our power we can make you invisible to Rajah Bhima's guards, and can even pass you safely through the palace walls."

And even whilst Indra spoke, Nala felt himself hurried off swiftly through the air; and before he had time for reflection, he found himself standing in the women's quarter of Rajah Bhima's palace; and in the very apartment where Damayanti sat at work amongst her young maidens.

You will understand how astonished these young ladies all were to see a handsome young rajah, dropped down in the midst of

them, as it seemed, from the clouds. Nala himself was so bewildered by Damayanti's great beauty—that surpassed anything he had dreamt of—that he could not speak to her. Damayanti, however, soon recovered her presence of mind. She felt convinced that this must be the Rajah Nala: for had not the swan told her that Nala was the handsomest prince in the world? and who could be handsomer than this young stranger? So she raised her hands to her forehead in polite salutation, and, approaching Nala, asked him, in a gentle voice, by what means he had come there; and what it was that he wished to say.

Then Nala dared not look at the beautiful Damayanti, lest he should be betrayed into falseness to the Gods; but he answered: "I have come here, invisible to your father's guards, noble Damayanti; I have been given power to pass through these thick palace walls, by the commands of the four Gods— Indra, Agni, Varun, and Yama. The fame of your beauty has mounted up to Swarga; so that the gods are resolved to come to your *swayamvara*. They have sent me to warn you that they will make themselves known to you by showing signs of their Immortality; and these signs will prevent you from confounding them with your merely mortal suitors."

Then Damayanti smiled, and said: "I have always paid due reverence and worship to the Gods; but ever since my conversation with the swan I have determined to give my love to none but Rajah Nala."

But Nala shook his head, sadly: "That was very well, noble Damayanti," he said, "before you had the Gods amongst your wooers. But when your eyes fall on the eternally radiant and happy Gods, how should you keep in your recollection a wretched man like me?"

Damayanti, however, assured Nala that she would choose no one else; and presently the young Rajah felt himself pulled, as it were, by strong cords; and Damayanti, and the apartment in Rajah Bhima's palace, vanished; and Nala found himself standing by the roadside, where Indra, Agni, Varun, and Yama, were waiting for him. Rajah Nala told the four Gods precisely what Damayanti had said—that she would give the Gods due worship; but that her love, and her hand, she would only give to Nala.

But Indra only smiled, and said: "Well, we shall see how that will be, when the time comes. But, meanwhile, you have earned the favour of the Gods by your faithfulness as their messenger."

The day of the *swayamvara* came at last; and there was a great camp round Rajah Bhima's palace, made by the retinue of all the rich and mighty rajahs who had come, with elephants and horses



laden with gifts and treasures; and any number of retainers and servants, so as to make a display of their magnificence. All the rajahs were assembled in the great Audience Hall, that was made dazzling by the silken turbans and jewelled raiment of these magnificent suitors. But Damayanti had only eyes for one amongst all this crowd; and she sought eagerly amongst her suitors for Rajah Nala. Then, to her surprise and dismay, she made a strange discovery; behold, there were five men in the throng of suitors exactly alike, and all five wore the countenance and outward appearance of Rajah Nala!

Then Damayanti understood that Indra, Varun, Agni, and Yama, had taken this form, because she had said that she would choose no other suitor but Nala. So she raised her hands to her forehead, and bowing herself reverently, she said: "I have always paid due worship to the Gods. May the Immortals now be true to their promise, and show me the signs by which I may know them as greater and more gifted than common men."

And as Damayanti spoke, a greater radiance fell upon four of the five men; whilst, by contrast, the fifth seemed to stand in a dark shadow. Damayanti knew the Gods, because their eyes that had never shed tears, looked straight, and did not blink; because their raiment shone without one speck of dust, showing they did not toil; because their feet, where they stood, did not touch the earth, showing they were not doomed to ever mingle with the dust, or to undergo the doom of death. But Nala, the man Nala, had a certain dimness of the eyes, because he had wept, and had yet to weep; on his raiment was the dust that told he was condemned to human toil; and his feet touched the earth—because, earthborn, he was doomed to die. And Damayanti, looking upon Nala, loved him all the more because of these signs of the common human destiny and fate he shared with her; and so, stepping down from her throne, and passing by the bright Immortals, she raised the hem of Nala's garment and kissed it, in token that she chose him for her lord. So Nala and Damayanti were married. . . .

And now I am afraid I must forego the pleasure of telling you their future story, although it is one of the most delightful of stories; but then it has no direct bearing on the subject of my lecture. You will find the story told by Mr. Talboys Wheeler in the second volume of his *Early History of India*; and you may read the literal translation from the Ramāyan in the admirable French version of M. Hippolyte Fanche.

This story of Damayanti's choice is only one amongst many that might be chosen from the Ramāyan and Mahābhārat, in illustration of the enthusiasm of compassion that belongs to the sentimental temper of old Indian poetry. There is the admirable

story of how Valmiki, the supposed narrator of the Ramāyan, received the gift of poetry.\* Valmiki is a holy hermit, leading a life of meditation in the forest. The constant subject of his meditation is the sorrow of the world. One day the God Brahma tells him the story of Rama. Valmiki feels that if only a Poet could be found to sing this story of a perfect life, in noble verse, then men would be urged to kinder, purer, nobler lives. But he, Valmiki, is no Poet. What is to be done to find one worthy of so noble a task? Valmiki ponders the matter over many days. Then, one morning, it chances that he stands on the border of a clear pool near his hermitage, where he is wont to perform those ablutions that form part of a Brahman's religious duties; and opposite him, across the pool, he observes two herons, of lovely plumage, flapping their wings and flying to and fro, full of innocent delight in life. But suddenly one of the birds falls, struck by a hunter's arrow; and the pure waters of the pool are stained by a track of blood! Then Valmiki is so moved to compassion and anger, that a cry breaks from his heart—a cry of lamentation for the innocent bird's death, and for the hunter's cruelty. And his words take a rhythmical measure that is full of passionate music; and having once repeated them, he feels compelled again and again to say the words over and over. Then Valmiki, marvelling much at what has befallen him, returns to his hermitage. And on the road he meets Brahma, who asks him if he has found a Poet worthy to tell the story of the perfect man Rama? Valmiki means to answer that he has not; but instead of speaking the words he would, the lamentation for the heron's death rushes to his lips, and he is confused and abashed before Brahma, fearing the God may think he means to mock him. But Brahma smiles, and says—

“Happy Valmiki! You have received the grace of Sarasvati, Goddess of Poetry, in recompense for your pity for the heron. Go now, and sing to the listening worlds the story of the perfect man Rama.”

In Valmiki you have the type of the holy and benevolent hermit of Indian story. But there is a hermit of quite another type and character, who is very frequently met with in the Ramāyan and Mahābhārat, and who may even be encountered in the actual India of to-day. Now, if we wish to avoid some fatal errors in judging Indian poetry, and the Indian religious sentiment, we must get at clear ideas concerning the different spiritual rank of these two types of hermits. It is from the Ramāyan and Mahābhārat we shall learn how to distinguish between the different

\* See my *Iliad of the East*, opening chapter; also *French Translation of Ramāyana*, by M. Hippolyte Fanché.

sort of respect paid to the holy Recluse who abandons the world to lead the religious life, and the more common Ascetic, who inflicts all manner of strange penances upon himself, in order to obtain some material advantages, or to acquire magical powers. You find in old Indian poetry, just as you find in the superstitious fancy of India to-day, a very strong conviction that magical powers are acquired by self-macerations and penitential exercise. *But these magical powers are not regarded as spiritual gifts at all*: they are looked upon as material advantages, purchased by material means. If you have read the beautiful Buddhist *Suttas* contained in the tenth volume of *The Sacred Book of the East*, you will remember that, in the *Tevigga Sutta*, Buddha describes the miracle-workers of his day as worldly-minded men, who give themselves up to low arts and lying practices, from which the true Bikshu (or religious man) will abstain. And in old Indian poetry also you find these wonder-working Ascetics described as personages whom it is dangerous to offend, but not at all as men who are admirable for their virtuous lives, or good behaviour. On the contrary, all the most famous Ascetics of the Ramāyan and Mahābhārat, and those whose miraculous powers are most remarkable, are represented as ill-natured, vindictive, and licentious. One of these worthies, Vibishana by name, withdraws himself from all the joys of life, and inflicts inhuman torments upon himself for I don't remember how many years, with the sole purpose of obtaining power to wither at a glance any being, man or animal, who may chance to disturb his meditations! And Ravana, the demon of the Ramāyan, has obtained all his magical power for mischief through years of devotion to penitential exercises.

These penitential exercises, then, do not suppose a spiritual temper in those who practise them, but rather the reverse. You will recollect that almost the first step Gotama takes on his path to the Buddhahood is the discovery that the fastings and self-macerations recommended by the Brahmans are useless as means for obtaining spiritual enlightenment. And in his first sermon—the *Sutta* entitled “The Foundation of the Kingdom of Righteousness”—Buddha declares that self-torture is as harmful as self-indulgence to the spiritual mind. The object of the true Ascetic, Buddha says, is not to afflict his body, but to subdue his body to his spirit, so that the best energy may be thrown into the higher life. You need not expect to find this stated with the same clear eloquence and power in the Ramāyan and Mahābhārat; but, at the same time, you do find, amidst the crowd of malignant Ascetics, whose appearance in any story is always a sign of coming mischief, a hermit, here and there, of calm and beautiful temper, who declares these penitential practices, and the magical powers

obtained through them, to be unworthy of those who have truly entered upon the religious life.

I shall hope to make this very important matter plain to you, by the stories of two eminent penitents—"Bulls amongst Penitents," the Indian poet calls them—who tread in the fantastic world of old story something of the same path that is made noble and earnest afterwards by the holy footprints of Buddha.

The first of these "Bulls amongst Penitents" is by no means a holy man to start with. I am speaking of the mighty Rajah Visvamitra. Those amongst you who are readers of German poetry may have heard his name before; for Heine has a satirical verse at his expense. Here is an English reading of it—

"The mighty monarch Visvamitra  
Plagues himself, by solemn vow :  
He would gain the Priest Vasistha's  
Most esteemed and sacred Cow.  
O, most mighty Visvamitra !  
What strange animal art thou ?  
What, these pains, these macerations,  
Only to obtain a Cow ?

Heine, however, is a little unjust to Rajah Visvamitra: the cow for whose sake he macerates himself is no ordinary animal; she is truly, as the Indian poet declares, a "pearl amongst ruminant creatures;" inasmuch as whosoever milks her obtains the object of his desires. So that, after all, Visvamitra's object was much the same as the objects of the prayers and religious observances of the worldly-minded man, in all ages, and of all religions.

Rajah Visvamitra, before the desire for this inestimable cow troubles his peace of mind, is described as a wealthy and powerful monarch, who has become weary of peaceful prosperity, and who starts off with a large army in search of adventures. He finds very few. Everyone is so afraid of him that he cannot possibly contrive to stir up any quarrel. The Rajah's method is to ask all whom he meets if they know of any chief, or living man, so powerful as Visvamitra? And the answer he generally receives is, that no such powerful being exists, either on earth, or in Swarga. One day, however, the Rajah and his army fall in with a religious mendicant; and Visvamitra, who is a pious rajah, bestows handsome gifts upon the beggar, after which he asks the mendicant the usual question: "Does he know any one so magnificent and powerful as Visvamitra?" The religious mendicant answers: "Truly, Visvamitra, you are a magnificent and powerful prince! But I know one man to whom your magnificence is as that of smoke to the solid rock; and that man is the Priest Vasistha."

"And who, pray, is this Vasistha, whose power is greater than mine?" asked the astonished Visvamitra.

"He is a solitary hermit—" said the religious mendicant—"who dwells in the depths of this forest. His garment is of bark, and he lives on roots and berries: yet is his power greater than that of all the rajahs in the world."

Visvamitra's curiosity is excited, and he resolves to pay this remarkable hermit a visit. So he and his army plunge into the forest; and, at last they discover the solitary cavern where Vasistha dwells. Vasistha receives the Rajah very well, and they discourse upon spiritual topics; and Rajah Visvamitra is about to depart on his road highly pleased and edified. But, unluckily for every one concerned, Vasistha has the thought of inviting the Rajah and his army to a feast.

Visvamitra at first politely refuses Vasistha's offer. He, the Rajah, cannot imagine how this hermit who himself feeds upon roots and berries, can provide a feast for an army of men in the midst of the jungle. Vasistha, however, assures the Rajah there is no difficulty in the matter. And in an astonishingly short space of time, behold a royal feast is spread on the grass—a vegetarian feast, you understand; but one consisting of all manner of highly prized delicacies such as fried grain, sweetmeats, pastry, refreshed by rivers of curdled milk. The soldiers are highly delighted and fall to feasting with shouts of joy. But Rajah Visvamitra's appetite is spoilt by envy; he cannot conceive how the Priest Vasistha has provided this feast all in a moment, and he begins to think there may be something in the beggar's statement that this hermit has powers greater than his own. Vasistha at length consents to explain the matter. He tells Visvamitra that Mahadeva has given him, as a reward for his self-macerations, a wonder-working cow named Sabala, and that he has only to milk this marvellous creature to obtain from her whatever he desires.

Then Visvamitra's anger increases. "It is not right," he says; "that a holy recluse leading a life of penitence should possess a creature who must sorely tempt him to break his vows of fasting and self-mortification. Therefore, Vasistha, it will be for your soul's health to give this miraculous Sabala to me."

"Not at all!" answers Vasistha. "Sabala supplies me with the clarified butter I have to pour on the sacrificial fire; and how otherwise should I obtain it in these wilds?"

"I will see to the matter of the sacrificial butter," answers Rajah Visvamitra. "It is a clear waste of the immaculate Sabala's magical gifts to expend them on such a trifle. What is more—as I am ruler over this country, I am the rightful owner of the cattle contained in it."

Vasistha, however, refused all bribes, entreaties, and threats, And when Visvamitra at length orders his soldiers to seize Sabala, Vasistha hurries off and milks the miraculous cow, and obtains thereby an army twice as large as Visvamitra's.

In the end the Rajah returns to his palace and city very crestfallen and sorrowful.

He calls to him at once all the wise men and Brahmins, and consults with them now he can humble Vasistha's arrogance, and obtain possession of the miraculous cow.

The Brahmins make answer :

"Earthly weapons are of no use against Vasistha, Rajah Visvamitra. If you wish to conquer him you must fight him with his own weapons. His strength lies in the merits he has acquired by his piety and his many penances. Can you accumulate merits by the same methods? If not, renounce all hope of Sabala."

Rajah Visvamitra feels that life has no joy for him whilst Vasistha possesses Sabala. So he puts off his royal robes, abandons his palace and city, and goes forth into the jungle—there to lead the life of self-mortification and hardship that alone can give him powers like Vasistha's. I have not time to tell you of all the ingenious tortures inflicted upon himself by Rajah Visvamitra : nor of his courage and persistency when time after time the merits he has accumulated by virtue of his penances are all scattered to the winds in punishment for some momentary forgetfulness of his vows. It is a proof of the malevolent use to which these Ascetics were supposed to turn the powers they obtained through their penitential exercises, that the Gods, out of pity for mankind, invariably try to thwart them in their attempts; or at any rate to buy them off by small rewards from laying up too dangerous a store of merits. Visvamitra is thus bribed and tempted by the Gods;—but although they delude, and lead him astray, he always returns to his purpose with renewed courage. And in the end he triumphs! He has laid up such a store of merits that no favour he can crave will be denied him. And Indra himself comes humbly to know what is his great request : and, of course, we are prepared to hear him ask for the humiliation of Vasistha and for possession of the miraculous cow. But Visvamitra has lost all anger against Vasistha, all desire for Sabala—he does not even remember their existence! All he asks for is spiritual emancipation and a mind set free from earthly desires.

In Rajah Visvamitra's story you have an example of the freedom, and even, one may say, of the scepticism of the Indian Poet, where the mere formalities of religion are concerned. Visvamitra, in his unregenerate days, violates all the *convenances* of Brahmanism :

he chooses to celebrate sacrifices; he curses away at Brahmans who offend him, just as though they were ordinary *tchandalas*; he insists upon raising his friend Trisanku, body and all, to Swarga; and when Indra objects, he talks of creating new Gods if the established ones show themselves so disobliging. But this scepticism affects only the outer forms, and leaves the reverence for spiritual ideas untouched.

In the story of Rajah Yayati you have, however, a more serious and impressive tone; and it is in this story especially that the student must feel he is standing in the land where presently will arise the noble idealism of Buddha. Rajah Yayati has the misfortune of taking to wife the daughter of a powerful Brahman, possessed of extraordinary magical powers. The Rajah quarrels with his wife, and is cursed by his Brahman father-in-law with premature old age. Transformed in the full heyday of his youth into a decrepit, tottering old man, Rajah Yayati entreats for some few years of vigour, in which to bid farewell to the joys of life, that he had taken so leisurely when he had not realized that he was so soon to lose them. The Brahman consents that Rajah Yayati may exchange his old age against any happier man's youth, for a brief period of years, but at the end of the term he must again take up his punishment. After many weary years of wandering, Rajah Yayati at length persuades the youngest of his own sons to take upon his shoulders the punishment of premature old age, and to make over to his father his own youth. Then Rajah Yayati, in the short period allowed him, resolves that he will know and taste to the full all earthly joys. He first tries the pleasures of the senses, and of luxurious living; then he gives himself the excitement and adventurous life of a hunter; afterwards, he tastes all the intellectual delights of philosophy and poetry. But the result in every case is the same. He proves that these joys in themselves have no existence, but that they exist only as objects of desire. He returns then to his son, and restores to him his youthful vigour and power of enjoyment, whilst he himself takes up again his punishment of old age. And this is what he says:—

“Behold I have found that the desired object never satisfies or quiets desire; it only feeds the flame like the clarified butter poured on sacrificial fire.

“Since all the rice, all the barley, all the cattle, all the costly treasures, and all the loveliest women the earth contains, cannot satisfy one man's desire, therefore all that can be done is to kill desire itself, and cast it out.

“I will then, for my part, put off this consuming thirst of desire. Son, take again your youth; for me, turning my heart

towards the contemplation of the things of eternity, I will have my habitation in the forest, the home of the gazelles."

Rajah Yayati then becomes a hermit. But, even so, his spiritual training is not complete. He practises severe penances, and by virtue of them obtains the privilege of mounting up to Swarga still clothed in his bodily garment. One day, however, Rajah Yayati boasts to Indra, the Sky God, of his astounding penances; but these boastings rob Rajah Yayati of the merits he has obtained, and as he has only reached Swarga because of these merits, the moment they are lost he commences to fall. He enters an intermediate state—between the earthly and celestial ones—and here he is made perfect. For he learns that "*not where one is, but what one is, is the important fact.*" "Whether here, or in Swarga, or on the earth, or even in the abyss Naraka, the seat of my being is in myself," says Rajah Yayati. "Pain does not belong to me, but grief for pain I can avoid. Better than Swarga is it to possess one's soul in tranquillity!" And as he speaks thus, there are cries of triumph heard around him. He has reached perfection, and Swarga is his home. Rajah Yayati, however, has no impatient desire left for the celestial abode. He ascends slowly, and as it seems almost reluctantly, repeating as he goes: "Better than Swarga is it to possess one's soul in tranquillity!"

In this legend you have, as I have said, a distinct forecast of Buddhism. What is more, I cannot but think that people who read the story of Rajah Yayati with some intelligent attention must have obtained a very clear conception of Buddha's doctrine of Nirvana. At any rate, they will hardly fall into the vulgar error of supposing that Buddha promises annihilation, even as Christianity promises Eternal Life, as a recompense of the perfect life. Buddha makes no promises; he simply declares that spiritual disinterestedness is the result and crown of spiritual culture.

And now let me, in conclusion, draw your attention to the close parallel that may be found between Rajah Yayati's triumph and the triumph of the comparatively modern Teufelsdröck, as this triumph is narrated in that finest chapter of *Sartor Resartus*, the "Everlasting No." There is this difference, however: Teufelsdröck's triumph is over the fear of death and hell; Rajah Yayati's, over the craving for celestial beatitude. It is of Tophet, and the pains of Tophet, that the modern idealist says, taking his stand by himself: "Hast thou not a heart? Canst thou not bear it, be it what it will?" It is of Swarga and of eternal bliss that the Indian mystic can declare: "Am I not a spirit? Shall I be greatly bettered or elated by it, be it what it may?"



## BUDDHA AND BUDDHISM.

*BY MRS. FREDERIKA MACDONALD.*

No sight in India is more familiar, at the entrance of a native bazaar, or out amongst rice and maize fields, or by the dusty wayside, than the spreading Peepul, or Banyan tree, that marks the place of a temple or shrine. What the building beneath the tree may be, it is not easy to say from a distance. It may be the tomb of a Mussulman saint ; or a Hindû temple worthy of the name ; or merely some canopy of stone above a rough symbol of Siva or Ganesha. The sacred tree affords a shelter to any one of these structures ; and sometimes, even imperils their existence by a too puissant protection ! For you have the strong boughs forcing their way through the temple roof ; or sweeping down, laden with trailing creepers to conceal, and sometimes to efface, delicate carvings, or interesting ancient inscriptions.

Now I am going to ask you to accept this sacred tree as an appropriate symbol of the over-shadowing imagination of ancient India, deep-rooted in Pantheism, and flowering out into luxurious leafage and blossom of myth and legend. A shadow we must expect to find upon Buddhism as upon all the Religions born beneath, or brought within reach of, its influence.

It is very necessary to keep this fact in remembrance. Buddhism is especially interesting amongst Indian Religions, and indeed amongst the Religions of the world, because it is the one great Religion that dispenses with supernatural proofs, and superhuman authority ; and that appeals directly to Man himself, bidding him be his own reformer, ruler, and refuge. But whilst these are the essential and peculiar characteristics of Buddhism, they are not the characteristics that will first strike a Western student, who commences his study of Indian religious thought with Buddhism. Unfortunately, this is a method too often followed. People without any knowledge of Oriental philosophy or religious thought, happen to be attracted by some beautiful or touching legend about Gotama Buddha ; or by some impressive text they hear quoted from the Buddhist Scriptures ; or, perhaps, these uninitiated inquirers are started upon the study of an unfamiliar

subject by some curious resemblances they discover between the personal characters and histories of Buddha and Christ; or between the organization of early Buddhism and mediæval Christianity. And, forthwith, we have these new enthusiasts plunging into the study of the subject, and imagining that they can read up Buddhism in a week, or even in a day or so; and remaining all the time completely ignorant of the fact that, in attempting to do this, they are beginning to read a long history at the closing chapters.

Now a great many mistakes, and some disappointments, are the results of this method of reading backwards; or, rather, I should say, of reading one isolated page torn out of a mighty volume. Readers of this sort cannot distinguish what is original and important in this special page from what are mere repetitions of, or improvements upon, old doctrines set forth in the earlier chapters. And what are the very first discoveries made by these adventurous students who run and read? Why, grotesque fables, monstrous, and sometimes puerile, tales concerning all manner of mythological personages and fantastic legends, where the wild imagination of the East plays lawlessly amidst fine poetic dreams and mere barbarous absurdities! I do not at all wonder that such readers are tempted to decide off-hand that there must be either wilful disingenuousness or stupid obstinacy in critics who describe Buddhism as an intellectual system independent of supernaturalism. What, for instance, will the practical Western, who has started on this new voyage of discovery without any previous knowledge of the country he is about to explore, think of the future founder of a pure religion of the intellect, who, to start with, enters his mother's side as a fine young white elephant with an abnormal number of tusks? Or, how will he reconcile the miraculous conceit of the infant Bodhisatva, asserting his claims in the very hour of his birth, to be honoured as Lord of the Universe, with the humble and laborious patience of the Buddha—who proclaims himself "only a Teacher;" and who, having gained enlightenment himself, by no other means than those he urges other men to follow, declares that spiritual emancipation is no divine gift of grace; but the conquest of man's intellect and will, rightly ruled and directed by himself? It is true that some more enthusiastic than judicious admirers of Buddhism have their own way of explaining away these apparent contradictions. A deep mystical meaning, they assure us, lies hidden beneath these grotesque fables. But then they have still to reconcile this statement of theirs with the Buddha's own declaration that he had no esoteric doctrine: and that "his hand was not the closed fist of the teacher who keeps some things

back." Again we have the explanation that recommends itself to the orthodox mind: the declaration that these childish and foolish superstitions, scattered amongst the noble truths of Buddhism, prove to what freaks and follies the wisest human minds are driven, when they presume to solve the problems of life, unaided by revelation.

Well, but I do not think that either of these explanations will be deemed necessary by students who approach the study of Buddhism from a right direction. Such students will have learned that they have reached in Buddhism the last and highest development of a system of ideas and beliefs, different to the ideas and beliefs that form the groundwork of Western religious systems. For those who have made themselves familiar with these ideas and beliefs in the simpler stages of their growth, the difficulties and contradictions that Buddhism is supposed to contain will have no existence. The Orientalist who has traced the growth of noble thoughts, and the transformation of rude and barbarous traditions, can easily establish the true relationship the spiritual doctrine of Buddha has to the myths and legends that form a natural and necessary part of its environment. As for white elephants with five tusks, and miraculously precocious infants, who speak as soon as they are born, and sometimes even earlier, he knows perfectly well what to make of these; he has met them scores of times before, in the course of his wanderings through the "immense flowering forests" of old Indian poetry, the haunted region where he knows full well all Indian philosophy and religious thought were born. Therefore, his attention is not drawn aside when he meets with these familiar figures upon the threshold of Buddhism. He knows that he was in a certain sense bound to find them there. They are the conventional ornaments that adorn the portico of this Indian temple, as of other Indian temples. Outside adornments that reveal the locality where the temple is reared, but that do not in any way express the spirit of the worship that is being carried on inside. Or let me return to my first simile: The initiated traveller recognizes once again the shadow of the Indian sacred tree, and knowing where he stands he is able to see the clear and shining mind of Buddha as a pool of pure deep water, that he can test and taste, and prove to have taken no taint or colour from the fantastic reflections cast upon its surface.

It is thus necessary that we should know something of the conditions of thought and feeling amidst which Buddhism arose; because without this knowledge we cannot properly distinguish between the spiritual doctrine and the alloy of old superstitions necessarily bound up with it. But this is not all. We cannot

properly understand even the spiritual doctrine, unless we know something of the earlier Religions in which Buddhism has its roots.

For it is true of Buddha, as it is true of Christ, that he did not come to destroy the earlier Law and the Prophets, but to fulfil them—in other words, Buddha, like Christ, was a spiritual liberator, who did not reject the doctrines he found in existence; but who laboured to spiritualize and perfect them; and to make men enslaved by formal dogmas free in their obedience to convictions made vital and inspiring. But, we must not fall into the error of supposing that the “Law” spiritualized by Buddha, was the same as the “Law” of the Hebrew Scriptures made more tender and humane by Christ. There are certain resemblances between Buddhism and Christianity that strike people at once. But a little reflection will show that these resemblances are only the necessary ones that must exist between two spiritual systems; that both have it for their purpose to lead men to a higher life than that of the lower passions and appetites. Apart from these common qualities, that belong to all the great World-Religions, Buddhism and Christianity have no relationship to each other. So far from being one and the same, in method and goal, they are not even kindred Religions. They are different Religions, and from this cause—*they spring from different sources*. Christianity has its roots in Semitic Monotheism, and the doctrines it inherits from Judaism make it necessarily a supernatural Religion—because these doctrines put the cause, the direction, and the goal of the Higher Life outside of the sphere where the mind and will of man have power. Buddhism has its roots in Aryan Pantheism; and the fundamental doctrines it inherits from Brahmanism leave it independent of supernaturalism, because these doctrines make the cause, the direction, and the goal of the Higher Life belong to the spirit that animates and moves the soul in man.

I am insisting upon this so much because here, too, we are face to face with an amiable blunder that has done a great deal to produce misapprehensions and disappointment; because it has set people looking for something in Buddhism they cannot find there; and has turned their eyes away from the spiritual possessions that actually belong to this religion: possessions that belong, as I have said, to no other Religion in the world. The blunder of which I am speaking is, of course, the supposition that in Buddha we have an Indian Christ; whose history and whose mission may be traced along lines parallel to those of the Founder of Christianity. Now, no more unsatisfactory and unsatisfying view can possibly be taken of the teaching or

Buddha than the one derived by studying this religion from the above standpoint. *If you go to Buddhism hoping to find in it what the sincere Christian finds in Christianity, you will, and must, be disappointed.* As a counterpart of Christianity Buddhism is distinctly unsatisfactory. It does *not* give you any authoritative account of the creation of the world; nor of the means by which sin and death first came to spoil the perfect order of things; it does *not* promise you in return for your prayers exemption from pain and evil, nor any support, nor favourable interference on your behalf on the part of the Divine Powers. Buddha does not proclaim himself a Saviour willing and able to take upon his shoulders the sins of the whole world. On the contrary he declares that each man must bear the burthen of his own sins; in other words, that there is no remission of sins, but only expiation. So far from promising to save his disciples by his merits from the effects of their misdeeds, he declares that no god, even, can do for any man that work of self-conquest and self-emancipation that, in the Religion of Buddha, stands for "salvation." "*By oneself the evil is done,*" says Buddha; "*by oneself one suffers. By oneself evil is left undone; by oneself one is purified. Purity and impurity belong to oneself; no one can purify another.*"—DHAMMAPADA, 163.

So that those who expect to find in Buddha more than a guide to the right path that they must tread themselves will be disappointed. Again, the goal and reward of the Higher Life in Buddhism is not in any external state, but in the attainment of a tranquil and perfect mind. Thus, students who persist in regarding Nirvana as a sort of Buddhist Heaven, are necessarily disappointed. Here is no new Jerusalem, no Holy City with "gates of pearl," and streets of "pure gold as it were transparent glass." No wonder the good Bishop Bigandet, after seeking in vain for some such lovely pictures of the Buddhist Paradise, concludes his very favourable report upon the moral aspects of this Religion, with the declaration that "by an inexplicable and a deplorable eccentricity this system merely promises men as a reward for their moral efforts the bottomless gulf of annihilation."

But if you will not find in Buddhism the promise of miraculous consolations that only a supernatural Religion can venture to hold out, you *will* find the encouraging and ennobling faith that man has, within himself, a strength and virtue that can render him independent of all such consolations. Buddhism, as I have said, stands out as the one Religion that bids man *trust himself*, that calls upon him to raise himself by his own strength; to govern and control and form himself; that assures him not only that

there is no strength outside of himself to help him, but also none that can prevail against him, if he conquer and hold the sovereignty over himself. "*Not even a god can change into defeat the victory of a man who has vanquished himself.*"—DHAMMAPADA, 105.

Buddhism is the one *Religion* that has preached this. Philosophy, of course, has taught the same lesson ; but then Philosophy is not Religion. Philosophy at best brings resignation, teaching men to endure the evils of life. But Religion does more than this. Religion brings spiritual enthusiasm and joy, carrying men through these material pains and evils, and leaving them their conquerors. And Buddhism does this: it has the animating enthusiasm and fervour that belong to a Religion, although the system it kindles (or as Matthew Arnold would have said, "lights up with emotion") is a system founded upon self-reliance, having its method in self-conquest and self-culture, and its goal in self-deliverance, and a refuge for man from the attacks of his own lower passions and from the evils of the world, in the "safe asylum" of an intellectual and spiritual Life.

But you may ask, "Is this Religion of pure intelligence actually Buddhism as taught by Buddha seven hundred years before Christ?" Until recently, travellers and commentators were wont to speak of Buddhism as the most mysterious and inexplicable religion in the world. And now when it is shown us as this simple and luminous system, that bears so strange a resemblance to the most enlightened idealism of our own day, can we feel sure that no modern gloss has been put upon this ancient faith, and no spiritual meaning imparted to it, that its first founders never thought or dreamed of? We have these suspicions expressed plainly enough by some critics, who have not hesitated to accuse the accomplished Orientalist, to whom modern students of Buddhism are most indebted—I mean, of course, Dr. Rhys Davids—of holding the insane belief that "Gotama Buddha was the Positivist Auguste Comte, born two thousand years too soon!"

Now the best answer to these wild assertions is to state plainly what it is that Dr. Rhys Davids—in conjunction, of course, with Professor Max Müller, Dr. Buhler, Dr. Fausbøll, and other eminent scholars—what it is that these men have done to revolutionize the whole study of Buddhism. We should recognize that they have not put forward any new arbitrary personal opinions of their own opposed to the views of earlier scholars. What they have done is to put the Western reader, who is ignorant of Eastern languages, in a position to judge for himself what Buddhism actually was. The magnificent series of translations from the most ancient Buddhist Scriptures, that we owe to

the patient and disinterested labours of Dr. Rhys Davids especially give us an opportunity of studying at first hand, if not the actual doctrine as taught by Buddha himself, at any rate the doctrine that early Indian Buddhists believed that he taught at the period when they first compiled and wrote down the reported sayings and doings of their revered Master.

The *Pitakas*, or *Baskets of the Law*, are to Buddhism very much what the Gospels are to Christianity. Because modern commentators point out discrepancies in the Gospels, and declare that on matters of doctrine, and even upon questions of facts, there are differences between the four narratives that make it difficult to suppose they were written by the Apostles whose names they bear—because of all this the fact is not changed that we have in the Gospels the oldest and most authoritative record of the life and teachings of Christ. In the same way, there is great improbability that the Buddhist *Pitakas*, as we now have them, were compiled by men who had been hearers and eye-witnesses of all they record; and yet it is in these *Pitakas* that we have the earliest and most authoritative account of Buddha's teaching now in existence: and we are therefore bound to accept the evidence of these ancient Scriptures as giving us the nearest approach now possible to a just and adequate knowledge of Buddhism as taught by Buddha.

And it is in these ancient Scriptures especially that we have this pure intellectual faith shining out distinct and clear, like some brilliant gem in a quaintly beautiful setting of fantastic myths and legends. How noble, high, and tranquil is the mind of the Eastern Sage that speaks through these old discourses! And, strangest of all, how directly his voice speaks to us, men and women of the modern world! We lose count of the centuries as we read and listen; it is hard to realize that these familiar thoughts, that almost seem our own, were recited in dim ages and remote climes by yellow-robed Bhikshus, hidden away in caverns in the rocks or forest mountains; to picture to ourselves how they were first written down by patient scribes on palm leaves; how savage kings rested from their wars and cruelties to collect these faded manuscripts; how ignorant priests treasured them as charms, when they had lost the art of deciphering the learned characters, or of applying the noble lessons. And then, at last, how the buried spirit of a vanished world was discovered and released by generous and disinterested Western scholars! We forget this long winding stream of human lives down which these noble thoughts have journeyed to us. As Emerson says, "They have no antiquity for us." They seem an echo of our own best thoughts.

And now, before looking more closely into these *Baskets of the Law*, let us see how and by whom the *Baskets* were, in the first instance, collected and filled. Here, as I have already told you, we have to trust to the beautiful and touching old legends of Buddhist traditions. According to these legends, a short time after the Master's death, when, in the language of the Tibetan *Dulwa* the "lamp of wisdom had been blown out by the wind of impermanency," there arose certain disputes amongst the Brethren concerning matters of doctrine. To settle these disputes, the first Council was called together, at Rajagaha, near Magadha. Then, when the whole Order was assembled, Kasyapa (counted the most learned amongst Buddha's disciples) was commanded to recite the metaphysical or philosophic doctrine, set forth in the *Abidharma Pitaka*. Afterwards, the oldest disciple, Upali by name, was called upon to repeat the laws and rules of discipline, and the circumstances that led to their establishment; and these rules of discipline were henceforth known as the *Vinaya Pitaka*. Then, lastly, the disciple whom Buddha had most loved, Ananda, the St. John of Buddhism, was charged to repeat the *Sutta Pitaka*; or the Parables and Sermons he had heard delivered at various times by the Lord. At first, these sacred texts do not appear to have been written down. They were committed to memory; and recited constantly by members of the Order; and even when the second Buddhist Council was held, a hundred years after the first Council, there is no evidence to show that any written Scriptures were in existence. The first proof that there were such written Scriptures is to be found in the edict of King Asoka, given B.C. 242, commanding that the Sacred Books of the Law of Buddha should be forthwith collected.

Now you will easily understand that the *Sutta* basket, the one containing the account of Buddha's Sermons and Parables, will naturally be the one laden with things most precious. It was of the *Suttas* especially that I was thinking when I said that the modern Western reader finds that Buddhism has "no antiquity for him." In the *Dhammapada*, Buddha's words strike as directly home to the heart of the modern idealist as Emerson's words, or Carlyle's, or Goethe's, or any words uttered by the most essentially "modern" of our prophets. I hope that those of you who have not read the *Dhammapada*, will let me persuade you to study the admirable translation of that noble book given by Professor Max Müller, in Volume X. of the *Sacred Books of the East*. I do not understand how any thoughtful or intelligent reader of the *Dhammapada*, who before starting upon the study of this work, has cleared his



mind of preconceived notions concerning the resemblances between Buddhism and Christianity, can rise from its perusal without feeling that he has gained a perfectly clear comprehension of the foundations, the method, and the goal of the Higher Life of Buddhism. Indeed, the *Dhammapada* has clearly been compiled with the intention of giving the weaker brethren, who feel themselves incapable of committing the whole contents of the three *Pitakas* to memory, a summary of the essential principles of Buddha's doctrine. The *Suttas* here brought together were preached by Buddha on various occasions, and at different periods of his career ; but they all deal with matters concerning the elements of the faith, and the training of the disciple in holy living ; and are distinguished by the simplicity and directness of a Religion whose concern is with the moral nature and mind of man ; and not with theories that explain the miraculous creation of the physical universe ; or predictions that foretell the conditions of a future state that lies beyond the sphere of human experience.

It is impossible in a lecture of this sort to attempt to give any idea of the beautiful and remarkable texts enshrined in every one of the twenty *Suttas* that form the *Dhammapada*. Here are a few verses, taken almost at random :—

“All that we are is the result of what we have thought. It is founded on our thoughts ; it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speak or act with an evil thought, pain follows him as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage.” (Verse 1.)

“Well-makers lead the water wherever they like ; fletchers bend the arrow ; carpenters shape the log of wood ; the wise man fashions himself.” (Verse 195.)

“If one man conquer in battle a thousand times ten thousand men, and another man conquer himself, he (the last) is the greatest conqueror.” (Verse 103.)

“Self is the Lord of Self ; who else should be the Lord ? With Self well subdued, a man finds a Lord, such as few can find.

“Mules are good if tamed, and noble Sindhu horses, and elephants with large tusks ; but he who tames himself is better still. For with those animals does no man reach the untrodden country (Nirvana) where a tamed man goes on a tamed animal, namely, on his well-tamed self.” (Verses 322, 323.)

"O Bhikshu, empty this boat! If emptied it will go quickly; having cut off passion and hatred, thou wilt go to Nirvana." (Verse 369.)

"And this is the beginning here for a wise Bhikshu: Watchfulness over the senses; restraint under the law; keep noble friends whose life is pure and who are not slothful; dwell constantly upon the highest thoughts.

"Rouse thyself by thyself; examine thyself by thyself; thus, self-protected and attentive, wilt thou live happily, O Bhikshu!

"For Self is the Lord of Self. Self is the refuge of Self: therefore curb thyself, as the merchant curbs a good horse." (Verses 375-80.)

In the *Dhammapada* we have what may be called essentially the *moral and religious principles* of Buddhism. For the *methods of philosophical argument*, and the intellectual foundations upon which this Religion of pure Reason is built, we must consult three other very important *Suttas*, that have all been translated by Dr. Rhys Davids; and will be found in Volume XI. of the *Sacred Books of the East*. These three *Suttas* are:—1. The *Sutta* entitled *The Foundation of the Kingdom of Righteousness*; 2. The *Sutta*, *On the Knowledge of the Vedas*; 3. *The Book of the Great Decease*.

The *Sutta* entitled *The Foundation of the Kingdom of Righteousness* may be described as the manifesto of the faith. It was the first sermon preached by Gotama, after his attainment of the Buddhahood; and it gained for him his first disciples. Those amongst you who have read Sir Edwin Arnold's *Light of Asia* will remember who those first disciples were. They were those five Bhikshus who had attached themselves to Gotama, in the days when he sought enlightenment by practising severe self-macerations in the depths of the savage forest. These were the methods recommended by the Brahmins whom Prince Gotama consulted, when driven by a sense of the vanity and misery of the earthly existence he had abandoned his father's palace and all the affections and enjoyments that bound him to his home; to seek, if haply he might find it, some remedy for the sickness unto death that he felt weighing upon himself and all around him. The five Bhikshus had also abandoned the worldly life; driven into the forest by much the same soul-sickness; only the Bhikshus did not hope themselves to attain enlightenment, they were in hopes of meeting some holy recluse, who would become their "Guru," or Spiritual Director. At first, they imagine they have found the Holy Man they are in search of, when they behold Gotama's emaciated form, and witness day after day the

courage and devotion he displays in leading the life of an ascetic. But the five Bhikshus go away offended when, after a time, Gotama, finding that all his fastings and penitential exercises bring him no illumination, abandons his solitary cavern; and follows again the practice of the other religious mendicants, who daily visit the villages and beg for food.

The disappointed disciples who have silently attended upon the Recluse for six years, say one to another: "It is vain that the Rahan Gotama has during six years of self-maceration and suffering sought for spiritual enlightenment; he has now joined the other Mendicants and goes forth, as they do, in search of food! As the man who wants water to refresh his forehead must seek for the cool stream or the pure, untainted well so must we go elsewhere, in search of the knowledge of the true Path that we can never obtain from him." So they take up their staffs and their alms-bowls, and set off in the direction of Benares; and finding no help anywhere they make themselves a hermitage in the Deer Forest called Migadaya. And it is here, after he has attained the Buddha-hood, that their old Master finds them. He remembers their long and patient waiting for the truth, he is moved to compassion by the recollection of how they went empty away, and therefore he starts forth in search of them. As he enters the Deer Forest the five Bhikshus recognize him, and say one to the other, "Behold! Here is this Renegade, this Castaway!" and they resolve to receive him with rudeness. But when he stands before them, the beauty of the Buddha's countenance, and the shining calm it wears, fill them with amazement. And as they stand there, not knowing whether to cover him with revilings or to fall at his feet in worship, the Master preaches to them this beautiful sermon, *The Foundation of the Kingdom of Righteousness*, and at its conclusion, the five Bhikshus, with one accord cry aloud:—"In Benares, at the Hermitage of the Migadaya, the supreme wheel of the Empire of Truth has been set rolling by the Blessed One; that wheel which not by any Sramana or Brahmana,<sup>1</sup> not by Brahma with Mara, can ever be turned back."

What then is this "Foundation" upon which the Kingdom of Righteousness rests? Nothing can be simpler, more intelligible, less "mystical," in the sense given to the word "mystical" by certain muddle-headed critics, who are pleased to suppose that this high and noble Religion of the Intellect was the screen for some secret systems of complicated ceremonials, and of the study and practice of magic—and that the Buddha, "the

<sup>1</sup> That is to say, not by any miracle-worker or dogmatic priest; not by any god or devil.

Enlightened One," was in reality a Prophet of Darkness, i.e. of Occultism; in other words, a powerful Wizard, instead of a Moral Reformer and Philosopher! The foundations of Buddha's kingdom are upon the recognition of the causes of suffering and evil; and then upon the recognition of the means of escape from these evils. In Buddhist phraseology we must first of all recognize the *Four Noble Truths concerning Suffering*; and then we must resolutely train ourselves to tread, with faultless perseverance, the *Noble Eightfold Path* that will lead us into a sphere where suffering and evil cannot overtake us. You must remember that Buddha inherited from Brahmanism the doctrine that personal existence, the life of the senses and emotions, is the sphere of "impermanency," the domain of Maya-Illusion. Buddha declares that pain and evil exist only in this sphere; that men are subject to pain and evil because they are under the dominion of sensual passions and selfish desires, that bind them and hold them as prisoners to the personal state. He declares that men can break these bonds, and open the door of their prison, if they will resolutely endeavour to resist selfish desires and passions, and to translate their interests and affections from the troubled sphere of sense and emotion into the tranquil sphere of mind and spirit. The method by which this work of self-emancipation is brought to a successful end is shown in the discourses connected with the Noble Eightfold Path. This Noble Eightfold Path is, as Dr. Rhys Davids says, "the very pith of Buddhism." The eight footsteps in the Path are as follows:—

1. Right views (free from superstition or delusion).
2. Right aims (worthy of the intelligent man).
3. Right speech (kindly, open, truthful).
4. Right conduct (peaceful, honest, pure).
5. Right livelihood (bringing hurt and danger to no living thing).
6. Right effort (self-control).
7. Right mindfulness (the active watchful mind).
8. Right contemplation (on the deep mysteries of life).

Now one has only to read over carefully these eight conditions belonging to the path of spiritual progress, to dismiss once and for all the accusation sometimes made against Buddhism that, by placing the goal of the Higher Life in the attainment of a perfect mind, it tends to make the cultivation of intellectual gifts of more importance than the acquirement of moral virtues. In the *Suttas* that treat of this doctrine of the Noble Eightfold Path, it becomes especially clear that under the method of Buddha the conscience and intellect are brought under one

and the same rule. Nothing can be more absurd in Buddhism than to speak of the higher wisdom as though it were something preferred above morality and virtue, since obedience to the moral law is one of the first conditions that must be fulfilled before the mind is in a fit state to take even the first steps towards this higher wisdom. The religious life is a life suitable to a being who has become purely intelligent; but this life cannot be entered upon by the undisciplined, who have not trained themselves yet in obedience to the ordinary laws of morality.

In the *Dhammapada*, and in the *Sutta*, *The Foundation of the Kingdom of Righteousness*, we have the positive side of Buddha's doctrine. In the *Sutta*, *On the Knowledge of the Vedas*, we have the negative side; and this *Sutta* should serve to show also Buddha's method of dealing with contemporary beliefs, of rejecting what in them was merely formal and superstitious, and of giving a new spiritual importance to what in them was true and helpful. This *Sutta* commences with a very pretty picture of the life of the India of Buddha's day.

Two young Brahmans, who have just performed the sacred ablutions that symbolize the purification of the soul, are walking upon the borders of a forest, inhabited by many holy anchorites and ascetics. The two young men are engaged in religious talk; and the subject that occupies them is the method by which union with "Brahm" can be most surely attained. The union of the individual soul with Brahm, the Divine Soul of the Universe, is the aim and purpose of the Religious Life in Brahmanism. Now it happens that the two youths have been under the spiritual direction of different "Gurus" or Teachers; they have therefore different views of the penitential exercises and religious observances most efficacious in bringing about this mystical "Union" that both regard as the Supreme Good. As they cannot come to any agreement, they decide to submit their quarrel to a Holy Man who has recently come, with a body of his disciples, to sojourn in the forest, a Teacher of whose marvellous wisdom and eloquence they both have heard. This Teacher—who wanders about from place to place to "instruct, arouse, incite, and gladden men with religious discourse"—is none other than Gotama Buddha himself. The two young men then come to the Holy Man of whose name they have heard, and the Lord Buddha receives them kindly. When they have laid their difficulty before him he begins, much after the manner of Socrates, to question those who have come to question him. So then these learned Brahmans have both laid down different paths that they say lead to union with Brahm? But now, do these guides know precisely where this Brahm, to whom they

will conduct their disciples, actually dwells? Have these favoured mortals seen Brahm at any time? Have they themselves found him? The young men are compelled to acknowledge that the Brahmans have not seen or found Brahm. And Gotama has made his first point. "So, then," he says, "the Brahmans versed in the three Vedas have, forsooth! said thus, 'What we know not, what we have not seen, to a state of union with that we can show the way.'" The young men admit the case looks much like that. "Well," but Gotama continues, "they and all men have seen the sun shining in the sky: can they now teach men to unite themselves to the sun that they see, and whose light and warmth they feel?" The young Brahmans reply that "the sun is remote from men, and of a different nature from men, and that therefore union between men and that bright luminary is impossible." Here Buddha has hold of the clue he needs. "So, then, only beings that are of one nature can be united? But although men know not the form and dwelling of Brahm, they know something, do they not, of the nature of Brahm? Is Brahm, for instance, proud, avaricious, quick to anger, impure? Has he or has he not self-mastery? The young Brahmans answer at once that Brahm has self-mastery, that he is free from pride, avarice, anger, impurity. "And how about the Brahmans," Buddha asks, "who profess to show the way to union with Brahm?" The young men are bound to admit that the Brahmans are avaricious, prone to anger, often impure, deficient in self-mastery. "Very good," Gotama continues, "that these Brahmans, versed in the Vedas, and yet bearing anger and malice in their hearts, sinful and uncontrolled, should after death, when the body is dissolved, become united to Brahm, who is free from anger and malice, sinless and has self-mastery, such a condition of things has no existence. So that thus the Brahmans, versed though they be in the three Vedas, while they sit down in confidence, are sinking down in the mire; and so sinking, they are arriving only at despair, thinking the while that they are crossing over into some happier land."

And then Buddha goes on to prove that the true and sure method of preparation for union with Brahm is to make one's mind perfect even as the mind of Brahm. And he proceeds to set forth three sets of rules of conduct—the first for those who will be blameless; the second binding on those who will be virtuous; the third necessary for those who choose to be perfect and to lead the Higher Life, whose goal is Nirvana, or the becoming of one mind and soul with the perfect Brahm. The first set of rules consists of the ordinary moral laws of purity,

freedom from cruelty, covetousness, and deeds of violence. The second set of rules are strict enough to satisfy most Western standards of perfection. The virtuous man must renounce worldly ambition, and all luxurious tastes, and unprofitable amusements; he must refrain from idle, as well as mischievous, words; indeed the topics of conversation permitted him, must leave him a silent member of any society composed of average human beings. He must not "gossip about great people;" he must not speak at all about meats, drinks, clothes, couches, perfumes, equipages, women, warriors, demi-gods, fortune-telling, hidden treasures, ghost-stories, nor about empty tales concerning things that are and things that are not." If these are the difficulties that lie in the way of those who desire to be virtuous, how much harder are the counsels of perfection given to those who aspire to lead the Higher Life! The truly religious man Buddha declares has elected to live for the things of the mind and the spirit alone; he must not only keep himself unspotted from the world, he must also withdraw himself from all those low arts and lying practices that win reverence from men; but that form no part of the spiritual vocation. The true Bhikshu, Buddha declares, is no diviner of dreams; he utters no spells or incantations; he does not indulge in prophecies; he must not occupy himself with astrology, he must not lay claim to powers of miraculous healing, he must not profess to discover magical virtue in gems, or weapons, or any material objects: in a word, his work is in the spiritual and intellectual sphere, and not amidst the mere vain show of things that tricks and bewilders men's senses; but that the true Sage knows has no real existence. Buddha's attitude towards miracles and miracle-workers is so plainly set forth in this, and other *Suttas*, that one can but marvel at the astonishing audacity of the Modern Restorers of worn-out and mischievous superstitions, who attempt to shelter their efforts to revive the belief in magic, in full nineteenth century, behind the name of the Great Wise Man of the East, who most resolutely resisted these "low arts and lying practices" as unworthy of the truly religious man. It is true that Buddha's attitude towards miracles is not precisely the modern attitude. He does not say, with Matthew Arnold, that "the main objection to miracles is that they do not happen." Neither does he hold, with the founders of the Psychical Research Society, that the question whether miracles do, or do not, happen, is one worthy of discussion and investigation. He makes it very plain that he does not consider the question of any consequence at all. Whether miracles do or do not happen is a matter of no importance—from the spiritual point of view, and to the man occupied with spiritual concerns;

since phenomena, occult or otherwise, belong to the sphere of Maya Illusion that the truly enlightened man knows to be a mere passing and deceiving dream.

And again, in *The Book of the Great Decease*, we find a plain and direct statement that contradicts in language unmistakably clear and convincing, the assumption that Buddha taught any secret doctrine to his favourite disciples during his lifetime ; or left any so-called "Esoteric" Faith to be treasured and handed down by a select band, but held back from what the author of "Esoteric Buddhism" delights to describe as the "vulgar herd." When Ananda, the beloved disciple, sees that the Master is brought by old age and sickness near to death, he waits anxiously for his opportunity to entreat that the "Blessed One" will not pass away from existence until he has given some instructions as touching the Order." And the aged Buddha answers the request with much the same gentle reproach that Jesus uses in His, "Have I been so long time with thee, and hast thou not known Me?"

"What, then, Ananda; does the Order expect this of me? I have preached the truth without making any distinction between exoteric and esoteric doctrine, for in respect of the truth, Ananda, the *Tathâgata* has no such thing as the closed fist of a teacher who holds some things back. Surely, Ananda, should there be anyone who harbours the thought, 'It is I who will lead the Brotherhood,' or 'The Order is dependent upon me,' it is he who should lay down instructions in any matter concerning the Order. The *Tathâgata* thinks not, Ananda, that he should lead the Brotherhood ; or that the Brotherhood is dependent upon him. Why then should he leave instructions in any matter concerning the Order? . . .

"Therefore, O Ananda, be ye lamps unto yourselves. Be ye a refuge to yourselves. Hold fast to the truth as a lamp. Hold fast as a refuge to the truth. Look not for refuge to anyone beside yourselves. . . .

" . . . And whosoever, Ananda, either now or after I am dead, shall be a lamp unto themselves, and a refuge unto themselves . . . it is they, Ananda, among my Bhikshus who shall reach the very topmost height—but they must be anxious to learn."

Here, then, in the words that close Buddha's mission to men, we have stated once again the doctrine of self-deliverance by the method of self-culture and self-control. Let me, in conclusion, quote the beautiful verses that recur over and over again, in different *Suttas*, like a song of triumph celebrating the conquest



of selfish desires ; and proving that the emancipation from selfishness does not mean the extinction of human sympathy :—

“ Verily,” the Buddha declares, “ this is the sort of goodness that the perfect Bhikshu has. He lets his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thoughts of love, pity, sympathy, and equanimity ; and so the second, and so the third, and so the fourth. . . .

“ Just as a mighty trumpeter makes himself heard, and that without difficulty, in all the four directions, so of all things that have shape or life there is not one that he passes by, or leaves aside ; but regards them all with heart of love, pity, and equanimity, far-reaching, grown great, and beyond measure.”

## BUDDHISM IN CHRISTIANITY.

BY ARTHUR LILLIE.

IN the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, July 15th, 1888, M. Émile Burnouf has an article entitled "Le Bouddhisme en Occident."

M. Burnouf holds that the Christianity of the Council of Nice was due to a conflict between the Aryan and the Semite, between Buddhism and Mosaism.

History and comparative mythology are teaching every day more plainly that creeds grow slowly up. None come into the world ready made and as if by magic. The origin of events is lost in the infinite. A great Indian poet has said, "The beginning of things evades us; their end evades us also. We see only the middle."

M. Burnouf holds also that the Indian origin of Christianity is now no longer contested.

"It has been placed in full light by the researches of scholars, and notably English scholars, and by the publication of the original texts. Amongst these astute inquirers, it is sufficient to note the names of Sayce, Poole, Beal, Rhys Davids, Spence Hardy, De Bunsen. It would be difficult to exhaust the list. In point of fact, for a long time folks had been struck with the resemblances, or rather the identical elements, contained in Christianity and Buddhism. Writers of the firmest faith and most sincere piety have admitted them. In the last century these analogies were set down to the Nestorians; but since then the science of Oriental chronology has come into being, and proved that Buddha is many centuries anterior to Nestorius and Jesus. Thus the Nestorian theory had to be given up. But a thing may be posterior to another without proving derivation. So the problem remained unsolved until recently, when the pathway that Buddhism followed was traced step by step from India to Jerusalem."

But if there are close analogies between Buddhism and Christianity, there are also marked antagonisms, the French scholar assures us. It is here that he and I shall differ most, for he founds these on a Buddhism that could not have been active in

Palestine at the date named. And so as a preliminary we must inquire who Buddha was and what he taught.

Exactly four hundred and seventy years before Christ there reigned in North Oude, at a city called Kapilavastu, the modern Nagar Khâs, a king called Suddhodana. This monarch was informed by angels that a mighty teacher of men would be born miraculously in the womb of his wife, Queen Mâyâ.

Attempts have recently been made to prove that the mother of Buddha was not a virgin; but this goes completely counter both to the northern and southern Scriptures. It is stated in the *Lalita Vistara* that the mother of a Buddha "must never have had a child." In the southern Scriptures as given by Mr. Turnour, it is announced that a womb in which a Buddha-elect has reposed is like the sanctuary of a *chaitya* (temple). On that account the mother of Buddha always dies in seven days, that no human being may again occupy it. The name of the queen is borrowed from Brahminism. She is Mâyâ Devî, the Queen of Heaven. The conception was miraculous, and of course entirely independent of the good King Suddhodana. "By the consent of the king," says the *Lalita Vistara*, "the queen was permitted to lead the life of a maiden, and not of a wife, for the space of thirty-two months."

Buddha entered his mother's womb in the form of a white elephant, and it is a curious fact that there is a double annunciation both in the Buddhist and the Christian Scriptures.

It is recorded that when Queen Mâyâ received the supernal Buddha in her womb, in the form of a beautiful white elephant, she said to her husband, "Like snow and silver, outshining the sun and the moon, a white elephant of six defences, with unrivalled trunk and feet, has entered my womb. Listen; I saw the three regions" (earth, heaven, and hell), "with a great light shining in the darkness; and myriads of spirits sang my praises in the sky."

A similar miraculous communication was made to King Suddhodana by the devas immediately after the miraculous conception:—

"The spirits of the Pure Abode, flying in the air, showed half of their forms, and hymned King Suddhodana thus:—

"Guerdoned with righteousness and gentle pity,  
Adored on earth and in the shining sky,  
The coming Buddha quits the glorious spheres,  
And hies to earth, to gentle Mâyâ's womb."

You see that the divine annunciation was to the father as well as the mother. It is a singular fact that in the New Testament there is also a double annunciation. In Luke (i. 28) the angel

Gabriel is said to have appeared to the Virgin Mary before her conception, and foretold to her the miraculous birth of Christ. In Matthew (i. 19) an angel comes to Joseph after his nuptials, and announces that what is conceived in his wife is of the Holy Ghost. Dr Giles remarks that it is a singular fact that Mary seems never to have told her husband a word about the miracle of which she was a witness, and that "Joseph found out the fact" (of his wife's pregnancy) "for himself."

This double annunciation in the case of both Buddha and Christ is most important. In the New Testament we get it from two distinct writers, whose accounts stultify one another. The Buddhist narrative, on the other hand, is harmonious. If there has been derivation, as some writers assert, the original narrative in this case seems plainly to have been the Eastern one.

Indeed, all through the lives of Buddha and Christ run in very parallel lines. A large star glittered in the sky at the moment of Buddha's conception, birth, and emancipation from the lower life. This was Pushya, the Prince of Stars, identified by Colebrooke, the best astronomer of the Sanskrit philologists, as the  $\delta$  of Cancer. When this star was rising, I may point out that the celestial elephant of the Buddhist zodiac (Capricorn) would be sinking into the womb of the mighty mother. When the young child was born, the Four Maharajas, the four great kings who guard each a cardinal point in Hindoo astronomy, held him up. These may throw light on the Magi, or Persian kings, that greeted the young Christ. In the Koran and one version of the *Gospel of the Infancy* a palm tree bends down to Mary at the moment of parturition, as the asoka tree overshadowed Queen Mâyâ. Asita, the Indian Simeon, a man of God, full of the Holy Ghost, was moved by the Spirit to come and salute the young infant and forecast his mighty destiny. In the *Protevangelion* at Christ's birth certain marvels are visible. The clouds are astonished, and the birds of the air stop in their flight. The dispersed sheep of some shepherds near cease to gambol, and the shepherds to beat them. The kids near a river are arrested with their mouths close to the water. All nature seems to pause for a mighty effort. In the *Lalita Vistara* the birds of the air also pause in their flight when Buddha comes to the womb of Queen Mâyâ, and fires go out, and rivers are suddenly arrested in their flow. The Buddhist books give long genealogies of King Suddhodana, who had nothing to do with the parentage of the young infant. Astrologers try to persuade King Bimbisara to destroy Buddha. The young child is presented at the temple. He receives gifts. Idols bow to him, as in the first *Gospel of the Infancy* the great idol bowed to Christ.

A little Brahmin was "initiated," girt with the holy thread, etc, at eight, and put under the tuition of a holy man. Buddha's guru was named Viśvāmitra. But the youthful Buddha soon showed that his lore was far greater than that of his teacher. When Viśvāmitra proposed to teach him the alphabet, the young prince went off, "In sounding *a*, pronounce it as in the sound of the word *anītya*; in sounding *i*, pronounce it as in the word *indriya*; in sounding *u*, pronounce it as in the word *upagupta*," and so on through the whole Sanskrit alphabet.

At his writing-lesson he displayed the same miraculous proficiency; and no possible sum that his teachers or young companions could set him in arithmetic could baffle him. In poetry, grammar, in music, in singing, he also proved without a rival. In "joining his hands in prayer," in the knowledge of the *Rig Veda* and the holy books, in rites, in magic, and in the mysteries of the *yogi*, or adept, his proficiency was proclaimed.

In the *Gospel of the First Infancy*, it is recorded that when taken to His schoolmaster, Zacchæus, "the Lord Jesus explained to him the meaning of the letters Aleph and Beth.

"8. Also which were the straight figures of the letters, which were the oblique, and what letters had double figures, which had points and which had none, why one letter went before another; and many other things He began to tell him and explain of which the master himself had never heard nor read in any book.

"9. The Lord Jesus further said to the master, 'Take notice how I say to thee.' Then He began clearly and distinctly to say, 'Aleph, Beth, Gimel, Daleth,' and so on to the end of the alphabet.

"10. At this the master was so surprised that he said, 'I believe this boy was born before Noah.'"

And in the twenty-first chapter Christ disputes at length with a rabbi, a doctor, and philosopher. This is part of the training of a Buddhist monk. Also the close analogies between the Buddhist books and the Apocryphal Gospels show that the two creeds were connected before the canon was fixed.

When the young prince grew up, the king consulted some soothsayers, who pronounced the following:—

"The young boy will, without doubt, be either a king of kings or a great Buddha. If he is destined to be a great Buddha, 'four presaging tokens' will make his mission plain. He will see—

"1. An old man.

"2. A sick man.

"3. A corpse.

"4. A holy recluse.

"If he fails to see these four presaging tokens of an *avatāra*, he will be simply a *chakravartin*."

King Suddhodana was very much comforted by the last prediction of the soothsayers. He thought in his heart, "It will be an easy thing to keep these four presaging tokens from the young prince." So he gave orders that three magnificent palaces should at once be built—the Palace of Spring, the Palace of Summer, the Palace of Winter. These palaces, as we learn from the *Lalita Vistara*, were the most beautiful palaces ever conceived on earth. Indeed, they were quite able to cope in splendour with Vaijayanta, the immortal palace of Indra himself. Costly pavilions were built out in all directions, with ornamented porticoes and furbished doors. Turrets and pinnacles soared into the sky. Dainty little windows gave light to the rich apartments. Galleries, balustrades, and delicate trellis-work were abundant everywhere. A thousand bells tinkled on each roof. We seem to have the lacquered Chinese edifices of the pattern which architects believe to have flourished in early India. Here beautiful women danced and sang to the young prince. Moreover, the king planted a garden of happiness, and persuaded the prince one day to drive over and see it.

But, lo and behold! as the prince was driving along, plump under the wheels of his chariot, and before the very noses of the silken nobles and the warriors with javelins and shields, he saw an unusual sight. This was an old man, very decrepit and very broken. The veins and nerves of his body were swollen and prominent; his teeth chattered; he was wrinkled, bald, and his few remaining hairs were of dazzling whiteness; he was bent very nearly double, and tottered feebly along, supported by a stick.

"What is this, O coachman?" said the prince. "A man with his blood all dried up, and his muscles glued to his body! His head is white; his teeth knock together; he is scarcely able to move along, even with the aid of that stick!"

"Prince," said the coachman, "this is Old Age. This man's senses are dulled; suffering has destroyed his spirit; he is condemned by his neighbours. Unable to help himself, he has been abandoned in this forest."

"Is this a peculiarity of his family?" demanded the prince, "or is it the law of the world? Tell me quickly."

"Prince," said the coachman, "it is neither a law of his family, nor a law of the kingdom. In every being youth is conquered by age. Your own father and mother and all your relations will end in old age. There is no other issue to humanity."

"Then youth is blind and ignorant," said the prince, "and

sees not the future. If this body is to be the abode of old age, what have I to do with pleasure and its intoxications? Turn round the chariot, and drive me back to the palace!"

Consternation was in the minds of all the courtiers at this untoward occurrence; but the odd circumstance of all was that no one was ever able to bring to condign punishment the miserable author of the mischief. The old man could never be found.

King Suddhodana was at first quite beside himself with tribulation. Soldiers were summoned from the distant provinces, and a cordon of detachments thrown out to a distance of four miles in each direction, to keep the other presaging tokens from the prince. By-and-bye the king became a little more quieted. A ridiculous accident had interfered with his plans. "If my son could see the Garden of Happiness, he never would become a hermit." The king determined that another attempt should be made. But this time the precautions were doubled.

On the first occasion the prince left the Palace of Summer by the eastern gate. The second expedition was through the southern gate.

But another untoward event occurred. As the prince was driving along in his chariot, suddenly he saw close to him a man emaciated, ill, loathsome, burning with fever. Companionless, uncared for, he tottered along, breathing with extreme difficulty.

"Coachman," said the prince, "what is this man, livid and loathsome in body, whose senses are dulled, and whose limbs are withered? His stomach is oppressing him; he is covered with filth. Scarcely can he draw the breath of life!"

"Prince," said the coachman, "this is Sickness. This poor man is attacked with a grievous malady. Strength and comfort have shunned him. He is friendless, hopeless, without a country, without an asylum. The fear of death is before his eyes."

"If the health of man," said Buddha, "is but the sport of a dream, and the fear of coming evils can put on so loathsome a shape, how can the wise man, who has seen what life really means, indulge in its vain delights? Turn back, coachman, and drive me to the palace!"

The angry king, when he heard what had occurred, gave orders that the sick man should be seized and punished; but although a price was placed on his head, and he was searched for far and wide, he could never be caught. A clue to this is furnished by a passage in the *Lahita Vistara*. The sick man was in reality one of the Spirits of the Pure Abode, masquerading in sores and spasms. These Spirits of the Pure Abode are also called the Buddhas of the past in many passages.

And it would almost seem as if some influence, malefic or otherwise, was stirring the good King Suddhodana. Unmoved by failure, he urged the prince to a third effort. The chariot this time was to set out by the western gate. Greater precautions than ever were adopted. The chain of guards was posted at least twelve miles off from the Palace of Summer. But the Buddhas of the Ten Horizons again arrested the prince. His chariot was suddenly crossed by a phantom funeral procession. A phantom corpse, smeared with the orthodox mud and spread with a sheet, was carried on a bier. Phantom women wailed, and phantom musicians played on the drum and the Indian flute. No doubt also phantom Brahmins chanted hymns to Jātavedas, to bear away the immortal part of the dead man to the home of the Pitris.

"What is this?" said the prince. "Why do these women beat their breasts and tear their hair? Why do these good folks cover their heads with the dust of the ground? And that strange form upon its litter, wherefore is it so rigid?"

"Prince," said the charioteer, "this is Death. Yon form, pale and stiffened, can never again walk and move. Its owner has gone to the unknown caverns of Yama. His father, his mother, his child, his wife, cry out to him; but he cannot hear."

Buddha was sad.

"Woe be to youth, which is the sport of age! Woe be to health, which is the sport of many maladies! Woe be to life, which is as a breath! Woe be to the idle pleasures which debauch humanity! But for the 'five aggregations' there would be no age, sickness, nor death. Go back to the city. I must compass the deliverance."

A fourth time the prince was urged by his father to visit the Garden of Happiness. The chain of guards this time was sixteen miles away. The exit was by the northern gate. But suddenly a calm man of gentle mien, wearing an ochre-red cowl, was seen in the roadway.

"Who is this," said the prince, "rapt, gentle, peaceful in mien? He looks as if his mind were far away elsewhere. He carries a bowl in his hand."

"Prince, this is the New Life," said the charioteer. "That man is of those whose thoughts are fixed on the eternal Brahman" (Brahmacharin). "He seeks the divine voice. He seeks the divine vision. He carries the alms-bowl of the holy beggar" (*bhikkhu*). "His mind is calm, because the gross lures of the lower life can vex it no more."

"Such a life I covet," said the prince. "The lusts of man are like the sea-water—they mock man's thirst instead of quenching



it. I will seek the divine vision, and give immortality" (*amrita*) "to man!"

Mr. Rhys Davids tries to show that *amrita* does not mean "immortality." The last is the very word pronounced by an Italian: *a*, privative in Sanskrit; *mṛita*, "death." *In*, privative in Latin, *mors*, *mortis*. The moral of this beautiful legend is surely that the dead saints proclaim a life where mortal imperfections vex no more.

The king was alarmed at all this, and ordered that the attractions of the zenana should be increased tenfold; but amid the music and the dancing strange sounds now fell on the young man's ear, the gentle whisper of the Buddhas of the past, the Moseses and Eliases of India. They told him of a mighty mission that was to be his, and urged him to fly. One night he rode off; and then he sat for seven years under a *figus religiosa*, or bo tree, at Buddha Gaya, seeking the divine voice by the process of the Indian mystic that is called *yoga*. Then he received the *abhisheka*, or baptism. Then he fasted forty-nine days and nights. There Mara, the tempter, visited him, and offered him the kingdoms of earth and the glory thereof. Under that tree, the most celebrated in the world, came to him a dream as unrivalled as the tree under which he dreamt. Religion had hitherto been political, ethnical, tribal. It had consisted of state ceremonial, of money and food offered to God through His representative the priest. Buddha proposed to substitute for religion by body corporate the religion of the heart. He proposed to break up the priesthoods and found a universal religion.

"Buddha," says M. Émile Burnouf, "opened his Church to all mankind, without distinction of origin, caste, country, colour, sex. "My law," he said, "is the law of grace for all." It was the first time that a universal religion had been thought of."

And, to make his dream concrete, the man who is so often represented to us as a crazy visionary, passing his life contemplating his navel, proceeded to drill an army whose energy and self-abnegation have never been rivalled: the Bhiksu Sangha (Mob of Beggars). Their house was to be the open air, their clothes rags from the charnel-house, their food the refuse of another's meal. East, west, north, and south he commanded them to march, never halting more than one night in one place. The newly discovered *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* shows us that Christianity was spread by the same process. The "Apostle" was never to stay more than three days in the same place. He was the wandering Ebionite or Bhikshu.

Let us complete in this place our sketch of the analogies between the lives of Christ and Buddha. Buddha had "twelve

great disciples." His teachings are condensed into a special "Sermon on the Mount." He had fire as well as water baptism. He was transfigured on a mount. He went to hell or purgatory, and freed the spirits in prison. He converted a penitent thief. Amrapali, the Buddhist Magdalene, figures in the narrative, and other sinners of the city who washed his dead body with their tears. A Judas at the Last Supper changed Buddha's bowl for a poisoned one. And the graves seem to have given up their dead when Buddha expired, for Ananda and another disciple saw myriads of spirits near the city.

And now what did Buddha teach?

There are two great schools of Buddhism. First of all, let us consider in what they agreed.

The religions of earth mean strife and partisan watchcries, partisan rites, partisan gestures, partisan costumes. But as the daring climber mounts the cool steep the anathemas of priests fall faintly on the ear; and the biggest cathedrals grow infinitesimal, and at last disappear in a pure region, where St. Paul and Buddha, Spinoza and Amiel, Mirza the Sufi and Swedenborg, can shake hands. The word *Buddhism* means gnosticism, interior knowledge. There is a plane of matter and a plane of spirit, an *ego* and a *non-ego*. The *ego* means earth's degrading fevers and ambitions, the temptations of Satanas, to use old symbol, and the tortures of hell, the *non-ego* is God, happiness, peace.

"The kingdom of heaven is within you," says Christ.

"In whom are hid all the treasures of *sophia* and *gnosis*," says St. Paul.

"The enlightened view both worlds," says Mirza the Sufi; "but the bat flieeth about in the darkness without seeing."

"Who speaks and acts with the inner quickening," said Buddha, "has joy for his accompanying shadow. Who speaks and acts without the inner quickening, his sorrow follows as the chariot-wheel the ox."

Let us now consider how the two great Buddhist schools diverge.

1. The earliest school, the Buddhism of Buddha, taught that after Nirvāna, or man's emancipation from rebirths, the consciousness of the individual survived, and that he dwelt for ever in happiness in the Brahma heavens.

2. The second, or innovating, school taught that after Nirvāna the consciousness of the individual ceased. The god of the first school was Buddha, which can have no other meaning than "intelligent;" the god of the innovating school was Sunya (unintelligent causation).

The first serious study of Buddhism took place in one of our colonies, and the first students were missionaries. Great praise

is due to these missionaries of Ceylon for their early scholarship, but naturally they ransacked the Buddhist books less as scholars than missionaries. Soon they discovered with delight the teaching of the second school, and statements that the Ceylon Scriptures were the earliest authentic Buddhist Scriptures, brought to the island by Mahinda, King Asoka's son (B.C. 306). In consequence of this, the missionaries concluded that Ceylon had preserved untainted the original teaching of Buddha, which plainly was pure nihilism.

But this can be completely disproved. In the seventh century Anno Domini, a Chinese monk named Hwen Thsang visited India; and he was appointed president of a great convocation, expressly summoned by King Silāditya, to put down the Buddhism of survival after Nirvāṇa, the "Little Vehicle," as it was called. No better witness can be conceived. He has recorded the following facts:—

1. The council of King Kaniśka (summoned about A.D. 10) was the first occasion on which the innovating Buddhism of the "Great Vehicle" was introduced.

2. This was done in spite of such strong opposition on the part of the *ācārya* of the great monastery of Nalanda (the high-priest of Buddhism), that the king was afraid to hold his convocation in the Buddhist Holy Land, as he had at first intended.

3. That the official representatives of genuine Buddhism at Nalanda asserted in the most positive terms that the innovating Buddhism did not come from Buddha at all, but from a sect of the followers of the Brahmin god Śiva.

4. On the nature of the innovating teachers the Chinese traveller is equally explicit. They were what is called in India Śunyavādīs (proclaimers of nothingness). See *Travels*, vol. i. pp. 173, 174, 220.

5. Hwen Thsang also completely demolishes the theory that the literature of Ceylon has preserved untainted the original teaching of Buddha, the "Little Vehicle."

"In Ceylon," he says, "are about ten thousand monks who follow the doctrines of the 'Great Vehicle.'" He says, moreover, the controversy raged fiercely for a long time before the "'Great Vehicle' was successful over the 'Little Vehicle.'" He tells us that one of the chief apostles of the "Great Vehicle" was Deva Bodhisatwa, a Cingalese monk. At Kanchipura the Chinese pilgrim came across three hundred monks that had just fled across the water from Ceylon, to escape the anarchy and famine consequent on the death of the king there (*Histoire*, p. 192). Hwen Thsang was a sort of Lord High Inquisitor at the Convocation of Kanouj, that suppressed the "Little Vehicle" a short

time afterwards. So he could make no mistake. Indeed, even Sir Monier Williams, in his new work *Buddhism*, gives up this the main position of writers like Oldenburg and Rhys Davids that the literature of Ceylon is purely the teaching of the "Little Vehicle." He holds it is true, in spite of this, that it is the "Little Vehicle," and not the "Great Vehicle," that proclaims the nothingness of the Śūnyavādi. Surely he cannot have read the analysis of the "Great Vehicle" literature by Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra, the leading Sanskrit scholar of the world. Surely he cannot have dipped into the "Great Vehicle" tractate the *Satusāhasrikā*, in which the Śūnyavādi maintains his doctrine of nothingness against all comers through one hundred thousand verses. Surely he must be unaware of the existence of the *Rakshā Bhagavatī*, where the nihilism of the "Great Vehicle" is also paraded in language, as Dr. Rajendra Lala Mitra tells us, borrowed by the "Great Vehicle" from the Brahmin Śūnyavādi (*Nepālese Buddhist Literature*, p. 178). Sir Monier Williams has thrown over the premises of the Ceylon missionaries, but still adheres to their conclusions.

And what is to be said about King Asoka, who within two and a half centuries of the death of Buddha carved the Buddhist credo on the rocks?—

"Confess and believe in God, who is the worthy object of obedience. For equal to this belief, I declare unto you, ye shall not find such a means of propitiating Heaven" (First Dhauli Edict, Prinsep).

"Among whomsoever the name of God resteth, this verily is religion" (Edict No. VII., Prinsep).

"I have appointed religious observances that mankind, having listened thereto, shall be brought to follow in the right path, and give glory to God" (*Ibid*).

No cavilling can explain away the word *Isāna*. To the Brahmin of Asoka's time it meant the Supreme. And on the subject of the eternal life of the individual the king is equally explicit.

"I pray with every variety of prayer for those who differ with me in creed, that they, following my example, may with me attain unto eternal salvation" (Delhi Pillar, Prinsep).

"May they, my loving subjects, obtain happiness in this world and the next" (Second Separate Edict, Burnouf).

On the Girnar rock the king tells us that he sent missionaries to Ptolemy in Egypt. This is confirmed by Philo, who says that the Therapents and Essenes were similar to the Gymnosophists of India, who opposed the bloody sacrifice. Alexander and his great city Alexandria bridged East and West.

Let us now travel from India to Palestine.

Religion owes an immensity to the old Israelite, but in my view more to his stubborn courage than his theological subtlety. We owe much to him also for his commercial activity. He promptly invaded the chief marts of the world, escorting the missionary. The religion of Israel did very well for a small Bedonin tribe, but the merchants of Alexandria must soon have found its three compulsory annual pilgrimages to Jerusalem quite intolerable. In their straits they encountered the Buddhist missionaries, and a curious compromise was brought about. 'Jahve and His Bible were retained, but Buddhist rites and Buddhist teachings were read into it.

The most subtle thinker of the modern English Church, the late Dean Mansel, boldly maintained that the philosophy and rites of the Therapeuts of Alexandria were due to Buddhist missionaries who visited Egypt within two generations of the time of Alexander the Great. In this he has been supported by philosophers of the calibre of Schelling and Schopenhauer, and the great Sanskrit authority Lassen. Renan, in his work *Les Langues Sémitiques*, also sees traces of this Buddhist propaganda in Palestine before the Christian era. Hilgenfeld, Mutter, Bohlen, King, all admit the Buddhist influence. Colebrooke saw a striking similarity between the Buddhist philosophy and that of the Pythagoreans. Dean Milman was convinced that the Therapeuts sprang from the "contemplative and indolent fraternities" of India.

Until I came across a bird's-eye view of a rude monastery in Siam, I had no very clear idea of a monastery of the Therapeuts in the jungle near Alexandria. It was a drawing by an old traveller, given by Picart. We see the house of assembly in the centre, where the Therapeuts, according to Philo, assembled every Sabbath for religious services. We see the cells of the monks sprinkled round in a rude city "four-square." Modern India gives us a far more accurate picture than we can get elsewhere of ancient Palestine, for it is an ancient Asiatic civilization that has not yet passed away. When I campaigned against a rude tribe called Sonthals in 1855, I saw everywhere the "booths of leaves" of the Bible, the pansil of early Buddhist books. Since the days of Job thieves "dig into" the rude mud walls of the East. Visitors to the Indian and Colonial Exhibition may have seen several straw-thatched houses where this would have been feasible. Of such a pattern, with mud or matted walls, were the huts perhaps of the Therapeuts.

Father La Loubère, in his *Description du Royaume de Siam*, gives us some very interesting details of Buddhist convent life.

In a central quadrangle is the chief building, surrounded by mortuary pyramidal columns, each covering the ashes of some rich man or saint, but dedicated to one of the Buddhas, and suggesting the columns in a Christian graveyard. In a second enclosure are the little mat-built pansils of the monks, surrounding the central building. Each holds a *svāmāna* and his servant-pupils, to the number sometimes of three. Each, too, has two little chambers in which a wandering beggar can obtain food and shelter, as amongst the Essenes. "I was an hungred, and ye gave Me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in; naked, and ye clothed Me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited Me not" (Matt. xxv.).

Each monastery is presided over by a *sancrat*, or bishop, whose insignia is an accurate mitre carved on a stone pedestal, which fact satisfied the good father that the Buddhists had stolen many ideas from the Christians. Matins began when a monk could see the veins of his hand, or see clearly enough to prevent him destroying reptile life in walking to the temple. The chanting went on for two hours; and then the begging friars, two and two, as in the Catholic Church, went round the neighbourhood and collected their scanty food. The meal seems to have been something after the pattern of the Therapeut bloodless oblation, for a portion of the food is always solemnly offered to Buddha. Then come teaching, reading, meditation, and then what the father calls "*La Méridiane*"—noonday prayers. His description of a sermon with a text taken from the sayings of Buddha is most interesting. The monks are ranged on one side of the temple, and the nuns on the other. At the close they say solemnly, "This is the word of God!" The Catholic father cites some of their texts: "Judge not thy neighbour. Say not, 'This man is good;' 'This man is wicked!'" This seems specially to have struck him.

Assisted by Philo, let us draw up some more points of contact between the Therapeut and Buddhist monks:—

1. Enforced vegetarianism, community of goods, rigid abstinence from sexual indulgence, also a high standard of purity, were common to both the Buddhists and the Therapauts.
2. Neither community allowed the use of wine.
3. Both were strongly opposed to the blood sacrifice of the old priesthoods.
4. The monks of both communities devoted their lives exclusively to the acquirement of a knowledge of God.
5. Long fastings were common to both.
6. With both silence was a special spiritual discipline.
7. The Therapeut left "for ever," says Philo, "brothers,

children, wife, father, and mother," for the contemplative life. This is Buddhism.

8. Like the Buddhists, the Therapeuts had nuns vowed to chastity. These were quite distinct, as Philo points out, from the vestals of the Greek temples. With the latter the chastity was enforced, with the former voluntary.

9. The preacher and the missionary, two original ideas of Buddhism, were conspicuous amongst the Therapeuts. This was in direct antagonism to the spirit of Mosaism.

10. The Therapeut, as his name implies, was a healer (or "curate," as Eusebius calls him) of body and soul. The Buddhist monks are the only physicians in most Buddhist countries. They cure by simples, and by casting out devils.

11. The Therapeut squatted on a "mat of papyrus" in his sanctuary. The monks "took their seats on mats covered with white calico," says Mr. Dickson, describing a general confession in a Buddhist temple (*Pātimokkha*, p. 2).

12. The Therapeuts were classed as, first, presbyters (elders), an exact equivalent for the word *arhat*, used in Buddha's day for his fully initiated monks. Under the presbyters were the deacons (*διάκονοι*, covered with dust or dirt). These novices were servant-pupils, the servitor friars (*Sāmanēros*) of Buddhism. An ephemerent, or temporary head, presided at the Therapeut service, as in Buddhism. That the Christians should have taken over this ephemerent and these presbyters or priests and deacons as their three chief officers is perhaps the greatest stumbling-block in the way of those writers, chiefly English and clerical, who maintain that there was no connection between Christianity and mystic Judaism.

Did Christianity emerge from Essenism? Historical questions are sometimes much more clear by being treated broadly. Let us first deal with this from the impersonal side, leaving out altogether the alleged words and deeds of Christ, Paul, etc. Fifty years before Christ's birth there was a sect dwelling in the stony waste where John prepared a people for the Lord. Fifty years after Christ's death there was a sect in the same part of Palestine. The sect that existed fifty years before Christ was called Essenes, Therapeuts, Gnostics, Nazarites, the Brethren. The sect that existed fifty years after Christ's death was called "Essenes or Jesseans," Therapeuts, Gnostics, Nazarites, the Brethren, and by-and-by Christians. Each had two prominent rites: baptism and what Tertullian calls the "oblation of bread." Each had for officers deacons, presbyters, ephemerents. Each sect had monks, nuns, celibacy, community of goods. Each sect had a sanhedrim of justice, quite independent of the historical Jewish

Sanhedrim. Each interpreted Scripture in a mystical way, so mystical that it enabled both to discover, as we see in the Clementine Homilies, that the bloody sacrifice of Mosaism was forbidden, not enjoined. The most minute likenesses have been pointed out between these two sects by all Catholic writers, from Eusebius and Origen to the poet Racine, who translated Philo's *Contemplative Life* for pious court ladies. If no questions of theology stood in the way, could any writer seriously affirm that the first sect had nothing to do with the rise of the second?

The Reformation, says Macaulay, was the struggle of the layman *versus* the monk. In consequence of this, Protestant divines have ever tried to eliminate the monk from Scripture. But even if they can prove that Christ was not an Essene, they gain little, for they would then only show that Christ had nothing to do with the Christian movement.

There are two Christs in the New Testament: an anti-Essene and an Essene.

The first was a "winebibber." He came eating and drinking. He condemned the Essene asceticism, fasting, mysticism, excessive lustrations. He went to Jerusalem for the festivals. He announced that the rawest catechumen of His flock was superior to John the Baptist. He used wine in the great Essene sacramentum, and ate animal food. He proclaimed that He was God Almighty come down on earth to prolong the Mosaic institutions till Doomsday.

But there is a second Christ, who was baptized by the Essene John. That is an awkward fact, for it entailed vows of poverty, chastity, obedience. This Christ, far from abrogating prayer and fasting—that is, the ascetic practices by which the divine voice was obtained—fasted in a cell in the Quarantania, and experienced the demoniac hauntings which all such ascetics tell us of. This Christ said that His disciple, like the Essene, must throw his money into the common stock and become an eunuch, abandoning wife, father, mother, sister, brother—every tie of the home life. This Christ sent forth an army of disciples to proclaim, instead of combating the "baptism of John," the "Gospel of the kingdom," two phrases for John's teaching; and these disciples were to go into every city and be received at a risk of life to both receiver and missionary by the converts of some previous propagandism, "those who were worthy." This is Philo's term for the Essene initiates. This Christ preached forgiveness instead of the *lex talionis*, and mercy instead of sacrifice. Indeed, none of His sublime teachings could have been preached if He belonged to anti-mystical Israel, for the reformer had no place



in the old Mosaism. The priests and Levites were the sole judges in matters of controversy, and reform in laws dictated by Jehovah for all eternity was punished with death. This Christ went up, it is true, to two festivals, but to oppose rather than confirm. On each occasion He was condemned to death by the legitimate tribunals. This Christ a day or two before His death at a critical moment, when His life was already at stake, based His proceedings on the example of John, when a word might have saved many valuable lives. Indeed, one cannot at all see why, if His movement was so completely disconnected from the Essene communists as Bishop Lightfoot holds, He should have mimicked them so much in externals as to have allowed the dominant party to confuse the two.

"This people which knoweth not the Law is accursed."

Of these two Christs which is the historical one? One test we have: the conduct of His flock after His death.

James, His brother, was His successor at Jerusalem. Of him Hegisippus, the earliest Christian historian, says,—

"He was consecrated from his mother's womb. He drank neither wine nor strong drink, neither ate he any living thing. A razor never went upon his head. He anointed not himself with oil, nor did he use a bath. He alone was allowed to enter into the holies. For he did not wear woollen garments, but linen. And he alone entered the sanctuary and was found upon his knees praying for the forgiveness of the people, so that his knees became hard like a camel's through his constant bending and supplication before God and asking for forgiveness for the people."

This shows that Christ's immediate successor was not aware that his Lord had changed the water-drinking Essenism of the Baptist for the gospel of eating and drinking. Epiphanius, in commending the passage, adds the sons of Zebedee to the list of ascetics:—

"For John and James, together with our own James, embraced that same plan of life. The two first of these were the sons of Zebedee; and the last, being the son of Joseph, was called the Lord's brother because with Him" (the Lord) "was he" (James) "nurtured and brought up, and by Him" (the Lord) "was he" (James) "always held as a brother, on account, of course, of Joseph's well-known connection with Mary, who was married to him. Moreover, to this latter James only was that honour assigned: once yearly to enter the holy of holies, because he was both a Nazarene and related by descent to the priesthood" (Epiphanius, *Hær.*, lxxviii., 13, 14).

The father adds that James ate no animal food, and also wore

the bactreum, or metal plate of the high-priest. Let us see also what Clement of Alexandria says of St. Matthew :—

“It is far better to be happy than to have a demon dwelling with us. And happiness is found in the practice of virtue. Accordingly the Apostle Matthew partook of seeds, and nuts, and vegetables, without flesh” (*Pædag.*, ii, 1).

This picture given of himself by St. Peter in the Clementine *Homilies* is equally Essenic :—

“However, such a choice has occurred to you, perhaps without your understanding or knowing my manner of life, that I use only bread and olives and rarely pot-herbs ; and this is my only coat and cloak which I wear” (Clem., *Hom.*, xii., 6).

Here is another passage :—

“The Prophet of the truth, who appeared on earth, taught us that the Maker and God of all gave two kingdoms to two [beings], good and evil, granting to the evil the sovereignty over the present world. . . . Those men who choose the present have power to be rich, to revel in luxury, to indulge in pleasures, and to do whatever they can. For they will possess none of the future goods. But those who have determined to accept the blessings of the future reign have no right to regard as their own the things that are here, since they belong to a foreign king, with the exception only of water and bread and those things procured with sweat to maintain life” (Clem., *Hom.*, xv., 7).

And if we turn from the shepherds to the flock, we find that this early Church of Jerusalem seemed as ignorant of the sayings of Christ on which Bishop Lightfoot founds his chief arguments as James and Peter. The Bishop admits that this Church was an assembly of “Essenes” and “Ebionites,” water-drinking ascetics, who rejected flesh meat ; “mystics,” and “Gnostics” (*Colossians*, p. 98 ; *Galatians*, p. 313) ; but he holds that they were “heretics.” At some period previous to the date of the Epistle to the Colossians a nunless, monkless, anti-Gnostic set of believers flourished, using wine in the Communion and holding ideas about the Trinity which approached the Catholic standard. But unfortunately these prehistoric Anglicans have left no trace behind them. Renan, in *Les Apôtres*, calls the Church of Jerusalem a “monastery without iron gates.”

The disciples lived in groups of houses, with a central house as a place of meeting, making the resemblance to a Therapeut or Buddhist monastery as close as was practicable in a hostile city. “Long hours were passed in prayer. Ecstasies were frequent. Each one believed himself constantly under the influence of divine inspiration.” The breaking of bread was mystical and sacramental. “The bread itself became in a certain sense Jesus,

conceived as the sole source of human strength." These repasts, which Renan calls the "soul of Christian mysteries," took place first of all at night, as with the Therapeuts. They were then restricted to evenings of Sunday, and by-and-bye were celebrated in the morning. The temporary *chef de table*, as Renan calls him, broke the bread and blessed the cup. Here we have the ephemereut of the Therapeuts. Into these poor houses of holy beggars the commonest pauper found admittance. This was, as Renan suggests, the great engine of propagandism. Penury found clothing, and food, and sympathy. The proud exclusiveness of the high-caste Jews was denounced. The doors of heaven were thrown open to the poor man.

Renan shows, too, that the Church of Rome was an early offshoot of this Church of Jerusalem; and we see (Rom. xiv.) that its members abjured wine and meat. Bishop Timothy, too, plainly had never heard of wine in the sacramentum. The liturgy of St. Chrysostom mentions water, and not wine.

I have left myself little time to talk of the many points of close similarity between the Buddhist and the Roman and Greek Churches.

The French missionary Huc, in his celebrated travels in Tibet, was much struck with the similarity that exists between Buddhist and Roman Catholic rites and customs.

"The crozier, the mitre, the dalmatic, the cope or *pluvial*, which the grand lamas wear on a journey or when they perform some ceremony outside the temple, the service with a double choir, psalmody, exorcisms, the censer swinging on five chains, and contrived to be opened or shut at will, benediction by the lamas with the right hand extended over the heads of the faithful, the chaplet, sacerdotal celibacy, Lenten retirements from the world, the worship of saints, fasts, processions, litanies, holy water—these are the points of contact between the Buddhists and ourselves." The good Abbé has by no means exhausted the list, and might have added "confessions, tonsure, relic worship, the use of flowers, lights, and images before shrines and altars, the sign of the cross, the Trinity in unity, the worship of the Queen of Heaven, the use of religious books in a tongue unknown to the bulk of the worshippers, the aureole or nimbus, the crown of saints and Buddhas, wings to angels, penance, flagellations, the flabellum or fan, popes, cardinals, bishops, abbots, presbyters, deacons, the various architectural details of the Christian temple," etc. To this list Balfour's *Cyclopædia of India* adds "amulets, medicines, illuminated missals," and Mr. Thomson (*Illustrations of China*, vol. ii., p. 18) "baptism, the mass, requiems."

Mr. Pfoundes, a gentleman who has resided for eight years in

a Buddhist monastery, tells me that when the monks enter the temple for the first time of a morning they make the precise gesture which Catholics call the sign of the cross. They mean by this to invoke the four cardinal points as a symbol of God.

Listen also to Father Disderi, who visited Tibet in the year 1714 :—

“The lāmas have a tonsure like our priests, and are bound over to perpetual celibacy. They study their Scriptures in a language and characters that differ from the ordinary characters ; they recite prayers in choir ; they serve the temple, present the offerings, and keep the lamps perpetually alight ; they offer to God corn, and barley, and paste, and water in little vases, which are extremely clean. Food thus offered is considered consecrated, and they eat it. The lāmas have local superiors, and a superior general” (*Lettres Édifiantes*, vol. iii., p. 534).

The lāmas told the father that their holy books were very like his. When he asked them whether Buddha was God or man, they replied, “God and man.” He furthermore describes the high altar of a temple covered with a cloth and containing a little tabernacle, where Buddha was said to reside. Cross-examined by the father, the lāmas said that he lived in heaven as well.

The Catholics use a “tabernacle” for the sacred elements ; and whilst they are there, a lamp is perpetually burning, which, like a similar Buddhist light, represents God’s presence. “Adi Buddha is light,” say the Buddhists.

Father Grueber, who, with another priest named Dorville, passed from Pekin through Tibet to Patna in the year 1661, published an interesting narrative of his journey, with excellent illustrations. Henry Prinsep thus sums up the points that chiefly attracted the father :—

“Father Grueber was much struck with the extraordinary similarity he found, as well in the doctrine as in the rituals of the Buddhists of Lha Sa, to those of his own Romish faith. He noticed, first, that the dress of the lāmas corresponded with that handed down to us in ancient paintings as the dress of the Apostles ; second, that the discipline of the monasteries and of the different orders of lāmas, or priests, bore the same resemblance to that of the Romish Church ; third, that the notion of an incarnation was common to both, so also the belief in paradise and purgatory ; fourth, he remarked that they made suffrages, alms, prayers, and sacrifices for the dead, like the Roman Catholics ; fifth, that they had convents filled with monks and friars, to the number of thirty thousand, near Lha Sa, who all made the three vows of poverty, obedience, and chastity, like Roman monks, besides other vows ; and sixth, that they had

confessors licensed by the superior lāmas, or bishops, and so empowered to receive confessions, impose penances, and give absolution. Besides all this, there was found the practise of using holy water, of singing service in alternation, of praying for the dead, and of perfect similarity in the costumes of the great and superior lāmas to those of the different orders of the Romish hierarchy. These early missionaries further were led to conclude from what they saw and heard that the ancient books of the lāmas contained traces of the Christian religion which must, they thought, have been preached in Tibet in the time of the Apostles" (Prinsep, *Tibet, Tartary, etc.*, p. 14).

I now come to the close analogy between the words of Buddha and Christ. The Buddhists have their Beatitudes, also the *subha shita*, or glad tidings. Also almost every saying in Christ's sermon on the Mount can be paralleled in the Buddhist books by some saying very like it:—

"By love alone can we conquer wrath. By good alone can we conquer evil. The whole world dreads violence. All men tremble in the presence of death. Do to others that which ye would have them do to you. Kill not. Cause no death" (*Sutra of Forty-two Sections*, v., 129).

"Say no harsh words to thy neighbour. He will reply to thee in the same tone" (*Ibid.*, v., 133).

"I am injured.' 'I am provoked.' 'I have been beaten and plundered.' They who speak thus will never cease to hate" (*Ibid.*, v., 4, 5).

"Religion is nothing but the faculty of love" (Bigandet, p. 223).

#### THE SOWER.

It is recorded that Buddha once stood beside the ploughman Kasibhāradvāja, who reproved him for his idleness. Buddha answered thus:—

"I, too, plough and sow; and from my ploughing and sowing I reap immortal fruit. My field is religion. The weeds I pluck up are the passions of cleaving to existence. My plough is wisdom, my seed purity" (Hardy, *Manual*, p. 125).

On another occasion he described almsgiving as being like "good seed sown on a good soil that yields an abundance of fruits. But alms given to those who are yet under the tyrannical yoke of passions are like a seed deposited in a bad soil. The passions of the receiver of the alms choke, as it were, the growth of merits" (Bigandet, p. 211).

"NOT THAT WHICH GOETH INTO THE MOUTH DEFILETH A MAN."

In the *Sutta Nipāta*, chap. ii., is a discourse on the food that defiles a man (*āmagandha*). Therein it is explained at some

length that the food that is eaten cannot defile a man, but "destroying living beings, killing, cutting, binding, stealing, falsehood, adultery, evil thoughts, murder—this defiles a man, not the eating of flesh."

#### THE ONE THING NEEDFUL.

Certain subtle questions were proposed to Buddha, such as—What will best conquer the evil passions of man? What is the most savoury gift for the alms-bowl of the mendicant? Where is true happiness to be found? Buddha replied to them all with one word: "Dharma" (the heavenly life) (Bigandet, p. 225).

"Let goodwill without measure, impartial, unmixed, without enmity, prevail throughout the world, above, beneath, around."

"WHOSOEVER SHALL SMITE THEE ON THY RIGHT CHEEK, TURN TO HIM THE OTHER ALSO."

A merchant from Sūnaparanta having joined Buddha's society, was desirous of preaching to his relations, and is said to have asked the permission of the master so to do.

"The people of Sūnaparanta," said Buddha, "are exceedingly violent. If they revile you, what will you do?"

"I will make no reply," said the mendicant.

"And if they strike you?"

"I will not strike in return," said the mendicant.

"And if they try to kill you?"

"Death," said the missionary, "is no evil in itself. Many even desire it, to escape from the vanities of life" (Bigandet, p. 216).

"AND IF THINE EYE OFFEND THEE, PLUCK IT OUT, AND CAST IT FROM THEE."

De Carne (p. 113) relates that the Buddhists of Laos are accustomed to offer up parts of their bodies to Buddha, to actually cut off a finger, an ear, and so on.

"I SAY UNTO ALL, WATCH" (Mark xii. 37).

"Watch thine own self. Of the three watches of the night, the wise man watches at least through one" (*Dhammapada*).

"YE MAKE CLEAN THE OUTSIDE OF THE CUP AND THE PLATTER, BUT WITHIN THEY ARE FULL OF EXTORTION AND EXCESS" (Matt. xxiii. 25).

"Why this goat-skin, O Brahmin, and thy matted hair? Without is varnish, but within is filth" (*Dhammapada*).

"Not matted hair, nor birth, nor gold, make the Brahmin,

but truth and justice. He who has burst the cord and the strap, who is awakened, . . . who, being innocent, patiently endures abuse, blows, and chains—the awakened man, the divine singer, he who overcometh, him I call the Brahmin” (*Dhammapada*).

#### “WHERE YOUR TREASURE IS.”

“A man,” says Buddha, “buries a treasure in a deep pit, which, lying concealed therein day after day, profits him nothing; but there is a treasure of charity, piety, temperance, soberness, a treasure secure, impregnable, that cannot pass away, a treasure that no thief can steal. Let the wise man practise virtue; this is a treasure that follows him after death” (*Khuddaka Patha*, p. 13).

#### BUDDHA’S THIRD COMMANDMENT.

“Commit no adultery.” Commentary by Buddha: “This law is broken by even looking at the wife of another with a lustful mind” (Rogers, *Buddhaghosa’s Parables*, p. 153).

Many other interesting passages may be found in the author’s *Buddhism in Christendom* (Kegan Paul).

#### PARABLES.

Buddha, like Christ, taught in parables. I give three or four which have been considered more or less like certain parables in the New Testament. For a collection of very beautiful ones, I beg to refer the reader to the *Popular Life of Buddha*.

#### THE PRODIGAL SON.

A certain man had a son who went away into a far country. There he became miserably poor. The father, however, grew rich, and accumulated much gold and treasure and many store-houses and elephants. But he tenderly loved his lost son, and secretly lamented that he had no one to whom to leave his palaces and suvernas at his death.

After many years the poor man, in search of food and clothing, happened to come to the country where his father had great possessions. And when he was afar off, his father saw him, and reflected thus in his mind: “If I at once acknowledge my son and give to him my gold and my treasures, I shall do him a great injury. He is ignorant and undisciplined; he is poor and brutalized. With one of such miserable inclinations ’twere better to educate the mind little by little. I will make him one of my hired servants.”

Then the son, famished and in rags, arrived at the door of his father's house; and seeing a great throne upraised and many followers doing homage to him who sat upon it, was awed by the pomp and the wealth around. Instantly he fled once more to the highway. "This," he thought, "is the house of the poor man. If I stay at the palace of the king, perhaps I shall be thrown into prison."

Then the father sent messengers after his son, who was caught and brought back in spite of his cries and lamentations. When he reached his father's house, he fell down fainting with fear, not recognising his father, and believing that he was about to suffer some cruel punishment. The father ordered his servants to deal tenderly with the poor man, and sent two labourers of his own rank of life to engage him as a servant on the estate. They gave him a broom and a basket, and engaged him to clean up the dung-heap at a double wage.

From the window of his palace the rich man watched his son at his work; and disguising himself one day as a poor man, and covering his limbs with dust and dirt, he approached his son and said, "Stay here, good man, and I will provide you with food and clothing. You are honest; you are industrious. Look upon me as your father."

After many years the father felt his end approaching; and he summoned his son and the officers of the king, and announced to them the secret that he had so long kept. The poor man was really his son, who in early days had wandered away from him; and now that he was conscious of his former debased condition, and was able to appreciate and retain vast wealth, he was determined to hand over to him his entire treasure. The poor man was astonished at this sudden change of fortune, and overjoyed at meeting his father once more.

The parables of Buddha are reported in the *Lotus of the Perfect Law*, to be veiled from the ignorant by means of an enigmatic form of language. The rich man of this parable, with his throne adorned by flowers and garlands of jewels, is announced to be Tathāgata, who dearly loves all his children, and has prepared for them vast spiritual treasures. But each son of Tathāgata has miserable inclinations. He prefers the dung-heap to the pearl mani. To teach such a man, Tathāgata is obliged to employ inferior agents, the monk and the ascetic, and to wean him by degrees from the lower objects of desire. When he speaks himself, he is forced to veil much of his thought, as it would not be understood. His sons feel no joy on hearing spiritual things. Little by little must their minds be trained and disciplined for higher truths.



## THE MAN WHO WAS BORN BLIND.

Once upon a time there was a man born blind ; and he said, "I cannot believe in a world of appearances. Colours bright or sombre exist not. There is no sun, no moon, no stars. None have witnessed such things !" His friends remonstrated with him, but all in vain. He still repeated the same words.

In those days there was a holy man cunning in roots and herbs, one who had acquired supernatural gifts by a life of purity and abstinence. This man perceived by his spiritual insight that away amongst the clouds on the steepes of the lofty Himalayas were four simples that had power to cure the man who was born blind. He fetched these simples ; and mashing them together with his teeth, he applied them. Immediately the man who was born blind was cured of his infirmity. He saw colours and appearances. He saw the bright sun in the heavens. He was overjoyed, and pronounced that no one now had any advantage over him in the matter of eyesight.

Then certain holy men came to the man who had been born blind, and said to him, "You are vain and arrogant, and nearly as blind as you were before. You see the outside of things, but not the inside. One whose supernatural senses are quickened sees the lapis-lazuli fields of the Buddhas and hears conch-shells sounded at a distance of five yoganās. Go off to a desert, a forest, a cavern in the mountains ; and conquer this thirst for earthly things." The man who was born blind did as these holy men enjoined, and by-and-bye acquired the supernatural gifts.

The interpretation of this parable is that the man who is born blind is one afflicted with the blindness of spiritual ignorance. Tathāgata is the great physician who loves him as a father loves a son. The four simples are the four holy truths. The holy men who accosted him are the great rishis, who teach the spiritual life in caves and in deserts, and wean mankind from the love of lower things.

## THE WOMAN AT THE WELL.

Ānanda, the loved disciple of Buddha, was once thirsty, having travelled far. At a well he encountered a girl named Matanga, and asked her to give him some water to drink. But she, being a woman of low caste, was afraid of contaminating a holy Brahmin, and refused humbly.

"I ask not for caste, but for water," said Ānanda. His condescension won the heart of the girl Matanga. It happened that she had a mother cunning in love philtres and weird arts ;

and when this woman heard how much her daughter was in love, she threw her magic spells round the disciple, and brought him to her cave. Helpless, he prayed to Buddha, who forthwith appeared and cast out the wicked demons.

But the girl Matanga was still in wretched plight. At last she determined to appeal to Buddha himself.

The great physician, reading the poor girl's thought, questioned her gently :—

“Supposing that you marry my disciple, can you follow him everywhere?”

“Everywhere!” said the girl.

“Could you wear his clothes, sleep under the same roof?” said Buddha, alluding to the nakedness and beggary of the “houseless one.”

By slow degrees the girl began to take in his meaning, and at last took refuge in the Divine Triad.

## THE PARSI RELIGION.

*BY DADABHAI NAOROJI.*

I DO not wish in this paper to enter upon controversial religious matters, but rather to place before the British public a picture of the present actual religious life of the Parsis, so that an idea may be obtained of that religious life and of its development.

It is generally believed that their prophet, Zoroaster, flourished some four thousand years ago; but that belief was much disputed, and I prefer to treat of matters less open to doubt. During the Greek rule, after the conquest of Persia by Alexander, the national religion did not occupy its predominant position, but when the Persian dynasty was re-established by Ardeshir Babezan, a great council of the learned priests was called and the religion was re-established and proclaimed as the national religion.

When the ancient rule of the Persian in his own land was at length overthrown by the Mahommadan, the nation as a whole became gradually Mahommadan. But a few of the Parsis emigrated to India, where they were allowed to land only on condition, as tradition goes, of laying down their arms, changing their kind of dress, and abstaining from killing the cow. Here, mingling with a different race of people, with a different religion, they forgot their own language, very nearly losing at the same time the knowledge of their old religious books. But one thing they did carefully. They took good care of the few religious books they had brought with them, and to a large extent the head priests preserved the understanding of them as they were taught from father to son, though without any critical knowledge or any right appreciation of the value of each.

Gradually, by intermarriage and otherwise, they mixed with the Hindus to such an extent that they became almost assimilated with them—"almost as Hindu as the Hindus themselves," making even offerings at the Hindu temples for several objects.

When I was prime minister of Baroda, a Parsi lady appeared before me on some appeal. I should never have considered her a Parsi, had not my attention being expressly called to the

fact, she was so completely Hindu in her accent, in her ideas, and dress. The ladies of the house, and the constant and intimate contact with Hindu neighbours, made customary in Parsi houses most of the Hindu ceremonies, which are observed in cases of birth, marriage, etc., and on holidays.

Then came the Mahommadan on the scene, when the Parsis, ever pliable, adopted some Mahommadan customs, and even carried offerings to the shrines of some famous Mahommadan saints. They now knew little of their original religion; but two of its teachings they never forgot—viz., that there was only one God, and that man should marry but one wife. It is true they continued to repeat prayers in the old Zend language, but they did not understand one word of them. With the exception of a few priests, no one knew anything of that language, or of the doctrines inculcated in their scriptures. Their lives were largely taken up with their own and Hindu ceremonials, they had a general vague knowledge of the doctrines and precepts of the religion, and a clear notion of its morality, so far that it required pure thought, pure word, and pure deed. Such was the condition of the Parsis at the beginning of the present century.

The English rule in India gave the Parsis greater freedom and scope for their energy. They were the first to start vernacular literature and newspapers on the Bombay side—and a considerable impetus to the development of these papers, and at the same time towards giving greater attention to the study of their religion, was afforded by a comparatively trivial controversy about the calendar. A learned priest from Persia found, on his arrival in India, that the Persian and Indian Parsi calendars did not correspond. The Parsis in India had added one month to the year every hundred and twenty years, to make up the solar or leap year. This, said the Persian priest, was wrong, as there was, he alleged, no sanction for it in the ancient religious books. A bitter controversy arose, members of families quarrelled, and finally the community was split up into two sects. Troublesome, as this incident proved, it had good results attending it. For it was the means of rousing among the Parsis a desire to know more of their religion, the result being a greater activity of mind and a great deepening of religious feeling. The development and the firmer establishment of the Press produced their reflex influence in helping rapid progress.

Next came the Christian missionaries, who began to attack the Parsi religion; and it was then open to attack from the double circumstances of the deterioration of the original pure ancient faith by the later priest-made literature and ceremonial, and of the adoption of Hindu and Mahommadan ceremonies. The

Christian Catholic Church, in the suburbs of Bombay, had also come into by no means unfriendly contact with the Parsis, but the missionaries carried on their attack with much vigour, and succeeded in converting two Parsi youths, who were attending their school. This produced great excitement among the Parsis, and they commenced vigorous efforts to check further conversions. Some magazines were started, to defend the Parsi religion and to attack and criticize Christianity. But more than that, they felt and were awakened to the necessity of teaching their children their religion more intelligently than by merely making them learn by heart some of the prayers and parts in the old Zend language, without understanding anything of it. The agitation of the missionaries led to the preparation of a catechism of the Parsi religion,\* as it was then believed to be, some extracts from which will be made, in order to give a fair idea of their theology and morals as then understood. The subject of the dialogue is thus described:—

“A few Questions and Answers to acquaint the Children of the Holy Zarthosti Community with the subject of the Mazdiasná Religion (i.e. of the Worship of God). Dialogue between a Zarthosti Master and Pupil.”

*Ques.* Whom do we, of the Zarthosti community, believe in ?

*Ans.* We believe in only one God, and do not believe in any besides Him.

*Ques.* Who is that one God ?

*Ans.* The God who created the heavens, the earth, the angels, the stars, the sun; the moon, the fire, the water, or all the four elements, and all things of the two worlds; that God we believe in—Him we worship, Him we invoke, and Him we adore.

*Ques.* Do we not believe in any other God ?

*Ans.* Whoever believes in any other God but this is an infidel, and shall suffer the punishment of hell.

*Ques.* What is the form of our God ?

*Ans.* Our God has neither face nor form, colour nor shape, nor fixed place. There is no other like Him; He is Himself singly such a glory that we cannot praise or describe Him; nor our mind comprehend Him.

*Ques.* Is there any such thing that God even cannot create ?

*Ans.* Yes; there is one thing, which God Himself even cannot create.

*Ques.* What that thing is, must be explained to me.

*Ans.* God is the creator of all things, but if He wish to create another like Himself, he cannot do it. God cannot create another like Himself.

*Ques.* How many names are there for God ?

*Ans.* It is said there are one thousand and one names; but of these one hundred and one are extant.

*Ques.* Why are there so many names of God ?

*Ans.* God's names, expressive of His nature, are two—"Yazdan" (omnipotence), and "Páuk" (holy). He is also named "Hormuzd" (the highest of spirits) "Dádár" (the distributor of justice), "Purvurdegár" (provider), "Purvurtar" (protector), by which names we praise Him. There are many other names also, descriptive of His good doings.

*Ques.* What is our religion ?

*Ans.* Our religion is "Worship of God."

*Ques.* Whence did we receive our religion ?

*Ans.* God's true prophet—the true Zurthost (Zoroaster) Asphantamân Anoshirwân—brought the religion for us from God.

*Ques.* Where should I turn my face when worshipping the holy Hormuzd ?

*Ans.* We should worship the holy, just Hormuzd, with our face towards some of His creations of light, and glory, and brightness.

*Ques.* Which are those things ?

*Ans.* Such as the sun, the moon, the stars, the fire, water, and other such things of glory. To such things we turn our face, and consider them our “kibleh” (literally, the thing opposite), because God has bestowed upon them a small spark of His pure glory, and they are, therefore, more exalted in the creation, and fit to be our “kibleh” (representing this power and glory).

*Ques.* What religion prevailed in Persia before the time of Zurthost ?

*Ans.* The kings and the people were worshippers of God, but they had, like the Hindus, images of the planets and idols in their temples.

*Ques.* What commands has God sent us through his prophet, the exalted Zurthost ?

*Ans.* Many are those commands, but I give you the principal, which must always be remembered, and by which we must guide ourselves :—

To know God as one ; to know the prophet, the exalted Zurthost, as His true prophet ; to believe the religion and the Avestâ brought by him, as true beyond all manner of doubt ; to believe in the goodness of God ; not to disobey any of the commands of the Mazdashnâ religion ; to avoid evil deeds ; to exert for good deeds : to pray five times in the day ; to believe in the reckoning and justice on the fourth morning after death ; to hope for heaven and to fear hell ; to consider doubtless the day of general destruction and purification (of all suffering souls) ; to remember always that God has done what He willed, and shall do what He wills ; to face some luminous object while worshipping God.

*Ques.* If we commit any sin, will our prophet save us ?

*Ans.* Never commit any sin, under that faith, because our prophet, our guide to the right path, has distinctly commanded “you shall receive according to what you do.” Your deeds will determine your return in the other world. If you do virtuous and pious actions, your reward shall be heaven. If you sin and do wicked things, you shall be punished in hell. There is none save God that could save you from the consequences of your sins. If any one commit a sin under the belief that he shall be saved by somebody, both the deceiver as well as the deceived shall be damned to the day of “Rastâ Khez” (the day of the end of this world). . .

*Ques.* What are those things by which man is blessed and benefited ?

*Ans.* To do virtuous deeds, to give in charity, to be kind, to be humble, to speak sweet words, to wish good to others, to have a clear heart, to acquire learning, to speak the truth, to suppress anger, to be patient and contented, to be friendly, to feel shame, to pay due respect to the old and young, to be pious, to respect our parents and teachers. All these are the friends of the good men and enemies of the bad men.

*Ques.* What are those things by which man is lost and degraded ?

*Ans.* To tell untruths, to steal, to gamble, to look with wicked eye upon a woman, to commit treachery, to abuse, to be angry, to wish ill to another, to be proud, to mock, to be idle, to slander, to be avaricious, to be disrespectful, to be shameless, to be hot-tempered, to take what is another's property, to be revengeful, unclean, obstinate, envious, to do harm to any man, to be superstitious, and do any other wicked and iniquitous action. These are all the friends of the wicked, and the enemies of the virtuous.

Such was the first effort made by the Parsis to give religious education to their children.

The old sacred books had also been translated before this time into the vernacular Gujarati language. But the translation was purely literal and baldly mechanical, carried out without any critical intelligence, and with a very unintelligible result. Now came a

new force into play. In 1849, I, with other young men, full of enthusiasm and fresh from college, established girls' schools, under the auspices of the "Students' Literary and Scientific Society." Full of enthusiasm, but with empty pockets, we had first to begin this work as volunteer teachers during morning and evening hours, having to contend not a little against the opposition of the majority of the people. But we persevered, and fortunately four gentlemen of the richer class, of advanced views, came to our aid, and the schools acquired a firm footing and became regular day schools.

About the same time we also established "The Dnianprasarak Mandlis" (Societies for the diffusion of knowledge), as branches of "The Students' Society." These branches, by their lectures and essays in the vernacular, helped the general advance in social and educational matters, both among Hindus and Parsis.

Another advance was the further extension of journalistic activity. In 1851 I started a weekly paper—"The Rast Goftar," which I think and hope gave a higher tone and increased usefulness to journalism among the Parsis.

In 1851 was started a Society, of which I was chosen the first secretary, called the "Rahanumai Mazdiashná" (Guide to the Worshippers of one God). The object of this society was, first, to do away with the Hindu and Mahommadan ceremonies which had become incorporated with their religious life; and, next, to make a thorough, critical investigation of the original ancient faith, and to clear it of all the grosser growths of subsequent times. This society had to encounter no little opposition. An antagonistic society was formed, but it soon broke down before the force of truth and intelligence. But the still more difficult opposition it had to encounter, with reference to the abolition of the extraneous Hindu and Mahommadan ceremonies, was from the mothers, wives, and sisters,—the home rulers of the family. Where the men failed the girls' schools succeeded, as was only to be expected. In these schools the girls learned that such and such things were simply prejudice or superstition. They raised the rebellion, in their own innocent and childish emphatic ways, against this or that custom. "No, ma," shrugging their little shoulders, said they, "this is not our religion, this is not right, this is superstition, etc.; no, ma, I won't do this." The mother listened to the dear little child when she did not listen to the husband or brother.

Near two generations have arisen since then. The children have grown up, and are now mothers themselves. They are completing the reforms which we young enthusiasts inaugurated, and for a time had been baffled in.

About the time when these movements were going on, in 1852

or 1853, another step was taken in the social reform among the Parsis in the position of woman.

Woman was always held in great honour among the Parsis; and the only difference between the status of man and woman then was that the latter was not allowed to freely associate with men at the social table of other men or in public assemblies. The Parsis accorded woman an honourable place in society, and placed her on an equality with man. Some of the Parsi heads of families—myself included—arranged to meet together socially with all the members of their families with them, to dine together at the same table and freely converse with each other. The result, after some strong opposition, was the removal of this female disability. One of the reasons why this reform took place was that the teachings of Zoroaster were distinctly in favour of the equality of man and woman. In the words of Zoroaster himself:—"O ye brides and bridegrooms, husbands and wives, I say to you these words: Live with one mind; do together all your religious duties with purity of thought; live towards each other with truth, and by these [things] with certainty you shall be happy." This was uttered perhaps four thousand years ago. Throughout the religious books, man and woman have been spoken of as humanly and spiritually equal.

Sir John Malcolm says:—

"There is every reason to believe that the manners of the ancient inhabitants of Persia were softened and in some degree refined by a spirit of chivalry which pervaded throughout that country, from the commencement to the end of the Kayanian dynasty. The great respect in which the female sex was held was no doubt the principal cause of the progress they had made in civilization; these were at once the cause of generous enterprise and its reward. It would appear that in former days the women of Persia had an assigned and an honourable place in society, and we must conclude that an equal rank with the male creation which is secured to them by the ordinance of Zoroaster existed long before the time of that reformer."

Though the Parsis have been living for centuries among Mahommadans and Hindus, they did not take to the institution of polygamy. For some time it was a question whether Parsis' social relations were to be judged by the Hindu or English law, as there was no recognized Parsi law for them, with this exception, that the *Pancháyat* (a Council of the Elders) controlled and decided social questions. As education advanced, and the old views and control of the elders began to be opposed, some persons took advantage to indulge themselves in marrying second wives, casting aside the first ones. The whole community—old and young—rose against this, to them, abominable innovation. An association was at once formed, a law was drafted, and the Legislature (the Viceroy's Legislative Council), after several inquiries



by a Commission and otherwise, passed a law making polygamy among the Parsis as penal as among Englishmen. I myself asked Professor Spiegel to point out any texts in the religious literature of the Parsis for or against polygamy. He replied: "As far as my knowledge goes there is no instance of polygamy in the religious literature of the Parsis. It is said that Zerdusht had three wives, but he had them successively. I share with you the conviction that the majority of the Parsis were at all times monogamists; although perhaps indulgences have been granted to kings and other individuals of high station." On further inquiry, he says that there is not a single text of the *Avesta* or the later *Parsis* which alluded to polygamy, and that the indulgences he referred to were upon Greek and Latin authority.

This Association was also naturally drawn to the question of the custom of early infant betrothals, taken from the Hindus. The older Conservative party were unwilling for several reasons to give way; and a sort of compromise was come to between the Conservatives and the young Reformers, so as to leave the question so open as to die a natural and gradual death, with the advance of education. Now very few such marriages take place, and the practice is fast dying away. What was forty years ago general is now rare and exceptional, especially in Bombay. The law is so framed and left open, that the first case of repudiation coming before law, at the time of the arrival at the proper age, will give the last legal deathblow to this custom of infant betrothals. Reverting to the religious beliefs and morals of the Parsis of that time, I will give a few extracts from the vernacular translation of one of the books, so far as to give a fair idea of the belief as it was then entertained, while the extraneous ceremonies were dying off under the efforts of the Rahanumai.

I now arrange some of these extracts under different heads, as inferences derived from them. To avoid repetition, I shall not, under each head, give all the texts corroborative of it.

The Parsis believe in only one God, the creator of all.

"1st Hâ.—The great judge, Hormuzd, of glory and brightness, the highest, the all-virtuous, the greatest, strictest, the all-wise, of the purest nature, the holiest, lover of gladness—invisible to the visible, the increaser—He created our soul—He moulded our body—He gave us existence. Hâ 35.—I worship thee, O Hormuzd, above all others, I invoke thee above all others. Hâ 36.—All virtuous thoughts, all virtuous words, and all virtuous works, flow from thee. O Hormuzd, I invoke thy pure nature above all others. Hâ 40.—By my deeds may I exalt and honour thy name. Under the protection of thy great wisdom have I acquired wisdom. May I reach thee. May I always be firm in thy friendship and in holy deeds.

In Hâ 44 several extracts relate to this subject, especially God as the creator of all, ending in "Thou art the Creator of all Creation."

In a prayer to Hormuzd (Hormuzd Yasht) occurs this—"My name is the Creator of all."

Zurthost worships God not only in this world, but in the heavens also.—Há 34, “O Hormuzd, I worship thee, and in the heavens, also, shall I worship thee much.”

The Parsis believe in the existence of angels, created by God, with powers to aid and benefit mankind in various ways, and to be the superintending spirits of the various parts of creation. The chief among these are the angels of good conscience (Bahaman) and of high piety (Ardebesht); the former is also the protecting angel of the harmless animals, and the latter the angel of fire.

“1st Há.—I invoke good conscience, high piety, love of excellence, high and perfect thought, Khordad and Amardad; all other angels that reach us; the angel ‘Meher,’ the lord and guardian of the forest, of thousand ears and ten thousand eyes of gladness and of comfort.”

Many other extracts can be made to deduce the above inference.

The various parts of creation are praised, or remembered, or considered holy, etc.

The first seven Há contain many texts illustrative of this.

“The fire created by God, the time of day, the early dawn, the waters created by God, the year that is spent in holiness, the moon and the glorious sun, the ocean of light, the stars, the immeasurable light, the mountains and the trees, the forest, the sheep, and the harmless animals;” in short, Nature, in her various parts and phenomena, is sometimes praised, sometimes remembered, sometimes described as holy.

As far as I have seen, there is no text in which any lifeless material object without intelligence or spirituality is invoked for assistance or benefit. Such prayers are always directed to intelligent spirits or angels, and to God above all and as the Creator and Lord of all.

The Parsi believes in the immortality of the soul, and in rewards and punishments, after death.

“Há 7.—O great and wise Lord, the reward that is due to the religious, may I and mine receive; that reward mayst thou give from thy stores of bounty in such a way, in this and the spiritual world, that I may be exalted, and may I live for ever and ever under thy all-holy leadership, and all-virtuous protection.

“Há 8.—May the aspirations of the holy be fulfilled, may the wicked and evil-doers be disappointed, and be swept away from the creation of the holy creator. The righteous are immortal.”

Extracts from Há 31 bear on this point.

Notwithstanding the abhorrence of evil and evil-doers, the Parsi is made to wish that the wicked may be converted to virtue.

“Há 33.—The wicked are punished according to their thoughts, and words, and deeds. Better it be that they be introduced to a taste of learning. O Hormuzd, give them a desire for wisdom, that they may become promoters of holiness.

“Há 44.—O Hormuzd, why may not these sinners become virtuous?”

The Parsi rests his pardon on the mercy of God, and his reward on the bounty of God.

“Há 1.—If I have by thought, word, or deed, intentionally or unintentionally, not kept thy commands, and thereby saddened thee, I invoke thee in this invocation, I pray to thee and praise thee, and beseech thee for thy pardon.

“Há 7.—May I receive the reward for piety through your bounty.”

The morality of this religion is comprised in the three words, pure-thought, pure-word, and pure-deed; and holiness, virtue, prayers, etc., are praised and exalted, and inculcated in many places.

“Há 7.—I praise the virtuous, the good, and the prayerful.

“Há 19.—The high priest is he who is learned in the religion, and whose whole life is devoted to the promotion of righteousness in the world.

“Há 20.—Whoever tastes the pleasure of righteousness, which is above all other pleasures, and walks in righteousness, shall be perfectly holy. He is virtuous who walks in virtue among holy men, and is true to them.

“Há 28.—O Hormuzd, may I reach thee through good thought (conscience). Give me virtue in the creation of this world, and in the other heavenly world. Thou givest Paradise to every man's soul, through good thought (conscience).

Whatever thou hast created is with good purposes. May I learn the desire for righteousness, as I am able.

"Há 31.—He who is holy goes to immortality.

"Há 34.—What, O Hormuzd, is thy will, what thy worship, and what thy invocation? God replies—See and adorn holiness—learn my ways of holiness with a good conscience.—Tell me, O Hormuzd, the ways of good conscience.—To be glad with the religion of the good, with virtuous deeds, and with holiness.

"Há 56.—May the virtue of the virtuous endure, and may wickedness vanish. In this house, may obedience prevail over disobedience, peace over quarrel, charity over hard-heartedness, good thoughts over bad thoughts, truth over words of lie, and piety over sin.

"Há 59.—I enjoin on earth and in heaven to study the 'Honwar.' I enjoin holiness on earth and in heaven. That to pray much to Hormuzd is good, I enjoin in heaven and on earth. I enjoin the holy, and the virtuous, and the prayerful, on earth and in heaven, to punish the evil spirit and his works, which are wicked and full of death—to punish the thief and the tyrant—punish the magicians of cruel intentions—to punish the breakers of promise, and those that induce others to break their promise—to punish the harassers of good and holy men—to punish the evil thoughts, words, and deeds of the sinful."

Truth is particularly inculcated.

"Há 7.—I understand truth-telling exalted.

"Há 19.—All the days of the holy man are with thoughts of truth, words of truth, and deeds of truth.

"Há 29.—The walker in truth is the obtainer of immortality, is not to perish.

"Há 31.—To speak true words is true excellence."

The Parsi believes in the necessity and efficacy of prayer.

"Há 56.—I invoke the benefit and success of prayer. To arrive at prayer is to arrive at a perfect conscience; the good seed of prayer is virtuous conscience, virtuous words, and virtuous deeds. May our prayers be efficacious in thwarting the inflictions of the wicked spirits and wicked men. May I love prayer, O Hormuzd, for prayer is joy to me. I resort to prayer, and I invoke prayer. Prayer to thee, O Hormuzd, is the giver of excellence, holiness, success, and high exaltation; it is the act of virtue.

"Há 59.—To pray much to Hormuzd is good, I enjoin in heaven and on earth."

The study of the religion is considered most meritorious; and the holy word (the Zend Avestá) is said to have been created by God before all creation. Extracts from Há 19 all refer to this subject

"Há 44.—What is the high religion? That which promotes holiness and truth with good thought, word, and deed."

"Há 19 declares "Honwar" (the word of God) to have been created before the heavens, before the waters, before all creation; and that whoever studies them without wearying shall attain to the paradise of the holy, which is full of glory.

"Há 59.—I enjoin on earth and in heaven to study the Honwar."

The Parsi religion is for all, and not for any particular nation or people.

"Há 46.—May all men and women of the world become my followers, and become acquainted with thy exalted religion. Whoever accepts Zurthost's religion, praises it, and meditates on it, and studies it much, to him God gives a place in the other world; and in this world Bahaman (good conscience) gives him exaltation."

The Parsi religion contains no propitiating of the devil. There is not a single reference to the thoughts, or words, or deeds of evil spirits, without wishing destruction or reformation to them.

"Há 1.—I learn the Zurthosti religion, the worship of God, which is different to that of the Devs (the evil spirits), and is like the justice of God.

"Há 8.—May the wicked and the evil-doers be disappointed, and be swept away from the creation of the holy Creator.

"Há 12.—I am of the religion of the worship of God, I praise that religion and declare it before the wicked, and praise it with good conscience, and virtuous words, and virtuous deeds.

"Há 44.—O Hormuzd, why may not these sinners become virtuous?"

"Há 32.—The sinners who desire bribery, and court sovereignty and power with lies, and think wickedness, they are the injurers of the world. They obtain, O Hormuzd, lamentation from their desire.

"Há 33.—The wicked are punished according to their thoughts, words, and deeds. Better it be that they be introduced to a taste of learning. O Hormuzd, give them a desire for wisdom, that they may become promoters of holiness."

The Parsis are called by others "Fire Worshippers," and they defend themselves by saying that they do not worship the fire, but regard it and other great natural phenomena and objects as emblems of the divine power. To me it appears that the imputation, on the one hand, is wrong, and the defence, on the other hand, a little overshot. Though the Parsi "remembers, praises, loves, or regards holy," whatever is beautiful, or wonderful, or harmless, or useful in nature, he never asks from an unintelligent material object, assistance or benefit; he is, therefore, no idolator, or worshipper of matter. On the other hand, when the Parsi addresses his prayers to Hormuzd, or God, he never thinks it at all necessary that he should turn his face to any particular object. He would say, and does say, his "Hormuzd yasht" (prayer to Hormuzd) anywhere whatever without the slightest misgiving. Again, when he addresses the angel of water, or any other but that of fire, he does not stand before the fire. It is only when he addresses the angel of fire that he turns his face to the fire. In short, in addressing any particular angel, he turns his face to the object of that angel's guardianship as his emblem. But, in his prayers to Hormuzd, he recognizes, or uses, or turns his face to no emblems whatever. Since fire only could be brought within the limits of a temple—any of the grand objects of nature (as the sea, the sun, etc.) being unavailable for this purpose—the temples naturally became the sanctuaries of fire alone, and hence has arisen the mistake of the Parsis being regarded as "Fire Worshippers."

This much is clear in Há 30—"He who knows God through his works reaches him;" but I do not recollect meeting with any text enjoining a Parsi to turn his face to any particular object as an emblem of God; though he is directed, as in the above text, to rise from Nature to Nature's God.

The doctrine of any sort or form of "propitiation of the devil" does not find place in their books. To struggle for doing good and destroying evil is an emphatic injunction.

Such was the state of the religious belief of the Parsis till a generation ago. But the study of the Zend Avesta has been since carried on with increasing zeal, activity, and intelligence by Parsi educated scholars. The "Ruhanumai," of which I have been president for some years, has been, through the means of

such scholars, carrying on its researches in the ancient literature, and from time to time bringing the results before the communities by public meetings and publications of their proceedings. The views now held by such scholars are that some of those religious books, which the Parsis considered canonical, were not so; that with the exception of a certain portion, called the *Gáthás*, they were not the words of Zarthusht or his contemporary disciples and coadjutors,—that before Zarthusht's time, the religion was almost a polytheism. Zarthusht made a complete revolution—preached the worship of the one great supreme God, as the beginning and end of the holy religion; and that God alone was the creator and giver and all-in-all of everything. He threw aside the earlier gods or spirits; addressing God,—“Thou and thou alone does my mind's eye see.”

The monotheism of Zarthusht was complete and unequivocal; and his monogamy was as clear. The present Parsi scholars maintain that the other books are later compilations by priests; that after the death of Zarthusht the priests rehabilitated, though in subordinate positions, the earlier spirits which were considered as presiding over fire, water, earth, and all the great creations of nature; and established the ritual and ceremonies as they thought desirable or profitable to themselves, as has happened with other religions,—that all the invocations to the various spirits for aid were not a part of the religion as Zarthusht established it; and that the Parsis should return to the original spirituality, simplicity, and purity of their religion,—that it is clear from Zarthusht's words, that the eternal principles of the worship of one God, and of purity in thought, word, and deed were alone binding for ever. But all customs, ritual and ceremonies adopted according to the circumstances of time, place and civilization, can be altered as the good and the physical and spiritual wants of the community may require. These scholars therefore urge that, whatever might have been the justification or reasons of many religious customs and ceremonies at the time when they were first adopted, they were not binding on the community for ever, and that they must reform their customs and ritual as time and circumstances might demand, after careful consideration by the community.

One of the books (the *Vandidad*) which was considered, in ignorance, as most sacred, is a compilation of various times, and is mainly directed to the inculcation of cleanliness. It is an elaborate sanitary code, according to the lights, requirements, and influences of the times and conditions of life of the Parsis.

I may conclude by remarking that, though the Parsis are a

small number—only about 84,000 in all India, in the midst of a population of 254,000,000—I think one important reason why they occupy so large a space in the mind of the world is that influence of their religion which imposed upon them love of God, love of truth, of charity in all its senses, and an earnest striving after doing some good as the mission of life, and which embraced their morality of life in pure thought, word and deed. May they always continue to follow in these paths!

## SIKHISM.

BY FREDERIC PINCOTT, M.R.A.S.

THE task we have before us to-day is to examine the religion of the Sikhs ; and it is an inquiry which will well repay the trouble, for many useful lessons may be deduced from it. It will teach us that some ideas apparently simple are in reality the result of ages of painful thought and investigation ; it will teach us that individual reformers are only conspicuous links in a chain of progress which has gradually brought man to the level at which we find him ; and, again, it will also teach us that the best intentions of the most earnest reformers may be rendered nugatory and even totally reversed by the enthusiasm and mistaken zeal of disciples and successors.

In order to understand Sikhism it is necessary to have some knowledge of the religious ideas current in India before Sikhism appeared on the scene. This will enable us to see that it was not a violent reform due to the stupendous abilities of one man, but that it was rather the natural outcome of previous ages of thought.

The earliest religious ideas of India which have descended to our time are those of pure Nature-worship—adoration of the sun, moon, wind, rain, clouds, dawn, etc., etc. In the course of centuries these primitive notions were worked up into a complicated system of religious belief, expressed in an elaborate ceremonial, with all the extravagance of Oriental pomp and wealth. It is needless to say that along with the upgrowth of such a ceremonial the heavens were peopled with a crowd of imaginary deities, whose favour had to be conciliated by constant offerings to the priests. At length the ceremonial and its associated ideas became too complicated and contradictory for even the priests themselves ; and they felt the necessity for explaining, reconciling, and systematizing the chaotic mass of notions which had sprung up in wild luxuriance.

A period of philosophical speculation then began which is of the most interesting character ; for, as many of the early books

then composed have been preserved, we are able to trace the first operations of the human mind in evolving spiritual ideas from natural facts. To-day we can only concern ourselves with the ultimate result of these speculations ; and this was that the entire universe and all its varied phenomena were held to be manifestations of one, eternal, unimpassioned Self or Existence. The whole universe, therefore, contained only the eternal, all-pervading Self as the sole reality ; hence it followed that there could be no second. All ideas of duality were rank heresy, arising from delusion ; and the highest knowledge was held to be the recognition of the absolute oneness of God and Nature. This was considered the end or object of all the sacred works, or Vedas, and therefore this system of philosophy ultimately came to be called *Vedānta* ; that is, "the end of the Vedas." As soon as the individual soul recognized the Unity, it was supposed to lose all desire for the fickle delusions of sense ; the bond which attached it to existence was thereby severed, and its round of transmigrations was brought to an end. By the attainment of true knowledge, therefore, the soul was set free or released from the bondage of existence, and thus obtained deliverance.

The system of philosophy of which we are now speaking was evolved at a very early date, probably long before the invention of the name by which it is now known. It is found in the ancient creed of Persia, and it penetrated into Greece in times beyond historical record. Socrates, Plato, and Pythagoras were essentially Vedāntists, even believing in the transmigration of souls. The Neo-Platonists were certainly tinged by the same doctrines ; and St. Paul also shows himself thoroughly Vedāntic by his expression, "In Him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts xvii. 28).

The evolution of this system of philosophy brought with it a great reform in India. The demonstration of the unity of God swept away the necessity for the crowd of subordinate deities ; and as the highest knowledge and final deliverance were to be attained only by the recognition of this unity, it followed that the ceremonial observances of the Brahmans were purposeless labours. This was perceived by Buddha, and he therefore boldly proclaimed all men equal, since all were equally illusory ; and he taught that a life of virtue and benevolence and a heart freed from all desire would secure deliverance from the miseries of transmigration. This simple creed of Buddha spread with rapidity, and remained the dominant creed in India for about a thousand years, until, in its turn, becoming mystical and corrupt, it passed into a degraded form of the old Brahmanical faith which it had formerly superseded. This revival of Brahmanism, or, as



it is now called, Hindûism, took place in the ninth century of our era, under the leadership of the famous reformer S'ankarâchârya.

We are now approaching the main subject of our lecture. The Panjâb being the earliest home of the Hindûs in India, was necessarily the seat of the most developed forms of Hindû religious thought; and the Panjâb being, furthermore, the connecting link between Persia on the one hand and Central Asia on the other, was unavoidably affected by the ideas of those who passed to and fro for commercial, political, and warlike objects. We know that the religion of the Vedas took its rise in the Panjâb, and that in the Panjâb Buddhism afterwards held undisputed sway. The deep impression which Buddhism made on the people of the Panjâb is attested by the direct evidence of ancient writers, and by the enormous number of Buddhistic remains continually being dug up there.

When the revival of Hindûism took place in Central India in the ninth century, Buddhism was still a power in the Panjâb, although it had become corrupt, and was ready for a change. The change came, however, from the reverse side, for in the year 1001 Mahmûd of Ghaznî broke into the Panjâb through Afghanistan, and, after ravaging the country for twenty or thirty years, ultimately established a governor in Lahore, the capital of the country; and from that day forward the Panjâb was cut off from the rest of India, and became a Muhammadan state.

It happened, however, that the Muhammadans who conquered the Panjâb were of Persian origin; and they brought with them the form of Muhammadanism which was largely mixed with the notions of the Sûfis, which were practically the same as those of the Vedântists, or ancient Indian philosophers. It must not be supposed that this called forth any sympathy between the conquerors and the conquered. The Muhammadans were far too bigoted to listen to, much less to examine, the religious ideas of their Indian subjects. The only result of the presence of the Muhammadans in the Panjâb was to partly Muhammadanize the district, and to partly cut it off from the religious movements of the rest of India.

The religious mind of India began to be exceedingly busy at this time. S'ankarâchârya, as I have already stated, overturned Buddhism in the ninth century by preaching belief in a personal god, whom he named S'iva, or Happiness; and he armed him with a trident, the emblem of Buddhism, as though to indicate that by the very law of Buddha he would overturn Buddhism. His was a church militant; but in the eleventh century Râmanuja arose, who preached a milder creed, taking Vishnu as his deity, Vishnu meaning "the pervader," the one who fills all space.

The religion of Rāmanuja was little else than a re-organization of Buddhism on a Hindū basis.

While these sectarian struggles were going on, the Muhammadans were consolidating their power in the Panjāb, and were pushing their conquests still further into India. Many desperate fights ensued ; and the patriotic feelings of the country being called forth, a species of hero-worship sprang up, which was brought to a focus by Rāmānand about the year 1350, who preached the godship of heroism under the name of an ancient leader : Rāma. Krishna, a warlike king of Mathurā, also received divine honours about the same time ; and to the present hour Rāma and Krishna are the two great deific names which cheer the lives and console the dying moments of orthodox Hindūs.

Notwithstanding the Muhammadan domination, these waves of Hindū thought found their way into the Panjāb, and helped to adulterate and confuse the lingering Buddhism, the reviving Hindūism, and the advancing Muhammadanism. The proof that the Panjāb participated in the mental struggle is found in the appearance of Gorakhnāth and his sect in the thirteenth century. That still famous teacher and learned enthusiast was a Yogi, the sect of Hindūs most in harmony with Buddhistic feeling ; and his object seems to have been to reconcile decaying Buddhism with reviving Hindūism.

A few more years, however, were sufficient to prove that the fierce hatred of idolatry everywhere shown by the Muhammadans was beginning to tell on the Indian mind. In the year 1450 the large-hearted Kabīr flourished. He was a worshipper of Rāma, the hero-god ; but he taught a spiritual form of adoration, which should engage the heart and mind and faculties, and not the mere body and purse. He attacked the worship of idols with all the energy of a Muhammadan, but he also assailed the authority of the Qurān and the Hindū sacred works alike. He scorned the exclusive use of a learned language for the conveyance of religious truth, and composed his own works in the dialect of his humble fellow-countrymen. It will be seen from this that Kabīr was a reformer of the most pronounced type. He broke with the present and the past, rejecting all formality and dogmatism, teaching the penitent and contrite heart to look up to God direct and to rest upon His all-sufficing goodness and mercy. But the most remarkable feature in Kabīr's teaching was the fact that he did not confine his influence to his Hindū co-religionists ; he addressed Muhammadans also, and was anxious to form a God-loving community on a basis common to both Hindū and Muhammadan.

Almost contemporaneous with Kabīr there arose in the Panjāb

the great and good man with whose teaching we are to-day immediately concerned. In 1469 the revered Nānak was born, near the town of Lahore ; and he came into the world inheriting the traditions which I have endeavoured to sketch, while the struggle between Hindū and Muhammadan thought and power was raging. The previous unsettlement in the minds of men had prepared the way for a devout and enthusiastic teacher to build up a new and living faith. Nānak was just the man for such a task ; for he was thorough and consistent, prudent and yet enthusiastic, inoffensive yet urgent, and as gentle in manner as he was strong in faith. Nānak was one of the great reformers of the world ; for he clearly perceived the errors of his predecessors, and had the boldness to proclaim the truth even against the opposition of the prejudiced and the interested, whether exalted or humble.

Nānak's principles may be reduced to a single formula—the unity of God and the brotherhood of man. For Nānak there was no such thing as a god for the Hindūs, a god for the Muhammadans, and a god or gods for the outer heathen ; for him there was but one God ; not in the likeness of man, like Rāma ; not a creature of attributes and passions, like the Allah of Muhammad ; but one, sole, indivisible, self-existent, incomprehensible, timeless, all-pervading,—to be named, but otherwise indescribable, adorable and altogether lovely. Such was Nānak's idea of the Creator and Sustainer of the phenomenal world ; and it was a conception which at once abrogated all petty distinctions of creed, and sect, and dogma, and ceremony. The realization of such a God shatters the sophistries of the theologian and the quibblings of the dialectician ; it clears the brow from the gloom of abstruse pondering over trifles, and leaves the heart free for the exercise of human sympathies. And if the grand idea of the Incomprehensible Unity, which could be only named and adored, levelled all distinctions of creed and caste, so did the great truth of the brotherhood of man sweep away the barriers of nation, tribe, and station. Nānak taught that all men are equal before God ; that there is no high, no low, no dark, no fair, no privileged, no out-caste ; all are equal both in race and in creed, in political rights and in religious aspirations.

These two ideas—the unity of God and the brotherhood of man—while uniting all classes on a common basis, at the same time separated those who accepted them from the rest of their countrymen as an association of God-fearing republicans ; for what Nānak claimed was Liberty from prescribed trammels, Equality before God, and the Fraternity of mankind. The practical application of the doctrines thus taught led to the formation

of a new nationality, the disciples of the great teacher becoming a republican fraternity, which gradually consolidated into a separate nation by the necessity for struggling for the liberty they claimed.

Having thus touched on the distinguishing feature of Nānak's creed, but little need be said of minor details. As might be expected from the historical sketch I have just given, the subordinate features of Nānak's faith were a mixture of Muhammadan, Buddhistic, and Hindū ideas. Like the Muhammadans, Nānak taught that the great Name of God was an efficacious instrument of saving grace; like the Buddhists, he held that the attainment of Nirvāṇa, or eternal, passionless repose, was the highest and final reward of virtue; like the Sūfis, he believed that each soul was an immortal ray of light from the Supreme; and like the Hindūs, he thought that the quintessence of all doctrine rested in a realization of the formula "So ham" ("*I am that*"). This last expression, it will be seen, is the pure Vedāntic doctrine that God is Nature, and that the individual soul is only a portion of the Universal Soul, in accidental union with cosmical phenomena. As soon as the individual soul realizes the idea that *it* and *that* are one—in other words, that *it* is only a minute atom of *that* eternal, all-pervading Self—then, by that very recognition, individuality is at once destroyed, and with it all the desires and passions which chain the soul to worldly life.

Such was the philosophical basis of Sikhism; and we will now give our attention to the history of the creed, and to the changes which time wrought on this earliest form of the faith. Nānak was born, as I have before said, near Lahore, in the Panjāb, in the year 1469; and although he was the son of a Hindū village accountant, his first teacher was a Muhammadan. This fact enables us to see how intimately the believers in the two creeds were associated together at the time. He seems to have been a thoughtful boy, with a large share of veneration in his character; for in his earliest years he sought the society of the religious enthusiasts known as *faqīrs*, who literally infested the Panjāb. These wild and semi-naked mendicants and dreamers filled the lad's mind with an insatiable yearning for spiritual perfectibility. From association with those who had renounced all the comforts of life for the love of God, he learnt to despise wealth, except as a means to relieve the wants of others. Accordingly it soon became his practice to give in alms to the poor all the material wealth which came into his possession. However laudable this practice may have been, it soon degenerated into an infatuation; and no property was safe if entrusted to young Nānak. As a climax to many similar acts, when only fifteen years of age

Nānak distributed among the poor the money which his father had given him to start with in business. His father then sent him to his sister, who was residing in the town of Sultānpur, in order to wean him from his faqīr associates.

Nānak at once took service in a Muhammadan gentleman's house; but he gave to the poor the whole of his salary, except a bare maintenance for himself. About this time he was induced to marry; and he had two sons, descendants from whom still exist. He was evidently faithful in his service, for he rose to the responsible position of steward of the estate, making all payments and managing the property according to his own will.

At the age of thirty-five the great change took place in his mind which gave to the world a new religion. It is stated, in the traditionary account of his life, that while engaged in his religious ablutions in the river he felt himself suddenly translated to the gates of Paradise; and that a goblet of the water of life was given to him, of which he drank; and that he heard the voice of the Lord commanding him, and saying: "Nānak! I am with thee: I have made thee happy: and whoever shall take thy name, they all shall be rendered happy by Me. Go thou, repeat My Name, and cause other people to repeat it. Remain uncontaminated from the world. Continue steadfast in the Name, in almsgiving, in ablutions, in service, and in remembrance of Me. I have given to thee My own Name; do thou this work."

Immediately Nānak had recovered from his trance, he uttered the keynote of his future system in the remarkable phrase, "There is no Hindū; there is no Musalmān." The utterance of such a paradox soon raised a commotion against him; and his employer, who appears to have been chief man in the village, was urged to interrogate him as to his revolutionary notion. When brought before the concourse, he put his questioners to shame by the unanswerable logic of his replies and the earnest devotion of his manner. Then the people, both Hindū and Musalmān, began to say that God was speaking in Nānak; and he was forthwith accepted as a religious teacher. This assumption of an instructor's office caused him to be called Guru Nānak; that is, Nānak the Teacher or instructor.

Nānak found in his late employer an ardent admirer; but neither friendship nor family ties could restrain his missionary impulse. He seems at first to have addressed himself exclusively to Muhammadans, and to have effected several conversions; but, after a time, he reached Benares, and proceeded to convert Hindūs in the very stronghold of Brahmanism.

In his travels he was accompanied by a devoted companion named Mardānā, who had some skill in playing on the *rabāb*,

a kind of violin. The companionship of this musician enabled Nānak to express most of his ideas in a metrical form ; and he composed a large number of poems in various metres, amounting in the whole to nearly three thousand stanzas. They consist of laudations of God under many Hindū and Muhammadan names, praises of His goodness and mercy, and incitements to purity of life and devotion. These poems, afterwards collected and largely added to, form the famous book called the *Adi Granth*, which is the Bible of the Sikhs.

While on one of his missionary tours Guru Nānak was captured by the victorious troops of Bābar, who broke into the Panjāb in 1526, and ultimately seated himself on the throne of India. The Emperor Bābar seems to have been much attracted by the independent spirit and piety of Nānak, and after a short time gave him his liberty. Immediately after his release he recommenced his labours among Muhammadans, and was certainly successful in his operations. Several special conversions were made, chiefly among members of that faith ; and it is related that he travelled to Kashmir, and even made a pilgrimage to Makkah, like an orthodox Musalmān. The latter statement must have been an exaggeration, and merely shows how far his followers thought him capable of going in his leaning towards Muhammadanism.

After thirty-four years of wandering and preaching, Guru Nānak came to the river Rāvī to die—in conformity with Hindū custom—by the side of a natural stream of water. He seated himself at the foot of a tree, and his cluster of Hindū and Muhammadan followers stood around to receive his final commands. Then the question of burial occurred to the disciples, and they communed among themselves as to whether the final rites should be according to the Hindū or the Muhammadan practice. This is the most remarkable proof that Guru Nānak's life was so free from bias that his most intimate associates could not agree as to which faith might more properly claim him. "We will bury him," said the Musalmāns ; "we will burn him," said the Hindūs. But the tradition relates that, as soon as life was extinct, the body vanished ; the obvious intention of the story being that it was the desire of Nānak to leave the question unsettled.

The founder of Sikhism died in the year 1538 ; and he left behind him the reputation of being an amiable, modest, prudent, and earnest man. He was thoroughly illiterate, for he could neither read nor write ; but his warm imagination enabled him to compose many spirit-stirring verses in his vernacular Panjābī, which are still read with fervour, and will long continue to be

read with devotion and reverence. His theology, as I have before said, consisted of boundless adoration of the great Name of God, and a recognition of the unity of God and the nonentity of all but God. As regards humanity, he held that all men were equal; he impressed upon all the duty of charity, forbearance, and active beneficence; and he even extended his sympathies to the lower creation, recommending abstinence from animal food and the avoidance of any infliction of suffering on animal creatures.

The first three successors of Guru Nānak were humble and pious men, the third of whom accepted voluntary contributions from the disciples. These were converted into a compulsory tax by the Fifth Guru, Arjun, who was an ambitious man. This change brought with it wealth and power, and excited the alarm of the Muhammadan rulers of the country, who could not view without concern the upgrowth of what seemed to them a Hindū sovereignty in the very heart of the district they had subdued. Guru Arjun had attained some scholarship, and employed much of his time in collecting the poems of his predecessors. These he arranged in the form of a book, classifying them according to the tunes to which they were sung, and almost doubling their bulk by compositions of his own. The book as he left it is that which I have before spoken of as the *Adi Granth*.

The government of the next four Gurus was chiefly characterized by conflicts with the Muhammadans; and at length the Tenth and last Guru arose, who completely changed the constitution of the fraternity. This was Guru Govind Singh, who was born and educated as a thorough Hindū, being a devotee of the goddess Durgā. He does not seem to have troubled himself with points of doctrine; his chief care was to re-organize the society on a fighting basis, to enable it better to contend with its Muhammadan antagonists. For this purpose he converted the whole body into an army, which he named the *Khālsā*, that is, "the pure;" and conferred upon each member of the body his own name *Singh*, or "lion." To the present hour the name of every member of the *Khālsā*, or army of the faithful, ends in *Singh*. Guru Govind Singh also finally abolished caste distinctions among his followers, and admitted members of all castes to his army. In consequence of his military instincts, he was able to fight with determination against the Muhammadans, and also to win their respect for his bravery and success, insomuch that it is reported that Bahādur Shāh received him courteously and employed him in important offices.

Another thing which Guru Govind Singh did for Sikhism was to give it a second sacred work. This book was called the

*Daswen Pādshāhī*, or "The Tenth Royalty," because it gave an account of the life and opinions of the Tenth Guru. This work is now held in equal reverence with the *Adi Granth*, although it is utterly undeserving of such a rank. For us it serves the useful purpose of showing the change which had passed over Sikhism in the interval between the First and Tenth Gurus. In the *Adi Granth* we find poems by Hindūs, by Muhammadans, and by the earlier Sikh Gurus, all mingled together with perfect indifference, but all of them expressing adoration of the Great Incomprehensible Soul of the Universe. In the *Daswen Pādshāhī*, on the contrary, we have nothing but Hindū material, containing miraculous and mythological performances of Hindū gods and goddesses, extracts from ancient Hindū books, wonderful stories for the edification of women, laudatory poems on the excellencies of weapons, and a history of Guru Govind Singh and his contests. It is perfectly clear, from a comparison of these two sacred books, that, in the interval between the First and the Tenth Gurus, Sikhism had passed from a position of neutrality to one of partiality for Hindūism and of antagonism to Muhammadanism.

The *Adi Granth* and *Daswen Pādshāhī* have, since the days of the last Guru, been treated with superstitious reverence by the Sikhs. At all of their gatherings these volumes are placed before them, and saluted with the royal greeting, "Wā Guru Jī kā Khālsā! wā Guru Jī kī Fateh!" just as though the Guru himself were present. A Sikh assembly is an impressive ceremony from its very simplicity. After the volumes have been placed and saluted, a large quantity of *kārā pras'ād* (made of flour, sugar, and clarified butter) is placed before them, covered by a cloth. The repast is then saluted, and prayers are offered; the assembly then sits down, the cloth is removed, and Sikhs of all classes eat it together without distinction of rank. Enormous quantities of this really delicious *kārā pras'ād* are eaten, and not only by the Sikhs, but by the poor outside and by any one in the vicinity. The injunction of Nānak was to eat and to give others to eat; therefore the Sikhs consider it a favour if any one, no matter what his religion may be, will sit down and eat the *kārā pras'ād* which they so bountifully supply. All distinctions of tribe or station are laid aside by the Sikhs on these occasions, in token of complete union in one cause. The leaders in the ceremony then exclaim, "Chieftains! this is a Gurumatā!" Prayers are then again said, and the chiefs sit closer together and say, "The sacred book is between us; let us swear by the holy volume to forget all external disputes, and to be united." This solemn bond of union seems to be the chief object of the meeting;



and it must have originated in the necessity for self-preservation resulting from the persistent efforts of the Muhammadans to root out the sect.

Guru Govind Singh's hatred of the Muhammadans was complete, notwithstanding the enterprises in which he deemed it prudent to engage along with them. He instituted a fine of a hundred and twenty-five rupees for saluting a Muhammadan tomb, however saintly; and from him arose the maxim that "a true Sikh should always be engaged in war with the Muhammadans, and slay them, fighting them face to face."

After a very turbulent reign, this Guru was treacherously murdered by the dagger of a Pathân follower, to whom he had shown special kindness. When dying, he refused to name a successor, informing his followers that after his death the *Adi Granth*, or sacred book itself, was to be their guide in every respect; and since then the book has always been placed at the head of every Sikh gathering, and is saluted with profound reverence; indeed, the book is never spoken of except as *Srī Adi Granth Sāhib*, which may be rendered as "The revered *Adi Granth*, Esquire," as though it were a human being.

The more recent history of the Sikhs, since the death of Guru Govind Singh in 1708, has been very turbulent. The command of the Khālsā, or army of the faithful, devolved upon Banda, who fought successfully on many occasions against the Muhammadan emperors of India. At length he was completely routed, and every Sikh who could be caught was killed. After this defeat Sikhism disappeared from sight for about a generation; but in 1738 the Sikhs ventured again to visit their tank at Amritsar, and established a small fort on the banks of the Rāvi. They were again dispersed in 1745; but they regained possession of Lahore in 1756. A brutal slaughter of the Sikhs in 1762 by Ahmad Shāh and his Afghans, instead of finally crushing the Sikhs, had the effect of knitting the remainder together into a compact body. Ahmad Shāh's forces were then defeated, and the whole country between the rivers Jhelum and Sutlej passed into the possession of the Sikhs. The fortune of the Sikhs seemed now in the ascendant, and in 1785 the whole Sikh community was united by the marriage of Ranjīt Singh with the daughter of Sudh Kunwar. In 1799 the Afghans finally left the district to the undisputed possession of Ranjīt Singh, who administered affairs with prudence and energy until just before the English occupation in 1845.

The Sikhs regard the mission of Nānak and Govind Singh as the consummation of former dispensations, including that of Muhammad.

The ceremony of initiation into the fraternity instituted by Guru Govind Singh, and which is still observed, is called the *Pāhul*; and the first celebration has been thus described: The Guru caused his five most faithful followers to sit side by side; and having placed some purified sugar in water, he stirred it with a sword; and after reciting some verses in praise of God, he caused the disciples to drink some of the liquid: some he placed on their heads, and the remainder he sprinkled over their bodies. Then patting them with his hand, he exclaimed, in a loud voice, "Say, 'Ye are the pure of God; and the victory is of the supreme God!'" This completed the ceremony, and the exclamation became ever after the watchword of Sikhism and the salutation among the Sikh brotherhood. Just as Muhammadans salute each other with "Salām alaikum!" so do the Sikhs on all occasions exclaim, "Wā Guru Jī kā Khālsā! wā Guru Jī ki Fateh!"

Guru Govind Singh ordained that every Sikh should always retain about him five things each beginning with the letter *k*; that is, *kes*, "hair," *kanghā*, "a comb," *karad*, "a dagger," *kirpān*, "a sword," and *kachh*, "short drawers." The meaning of these things is this:—A Sikh is to be distinctly different from both Hindū and Muhammadan, both of whom shave the head. A Sikh is never to shave, or even to cut either hair or beard, as long as he lives; and, on account of the *kes*, or hair, the *kanghā*, or comb, is necessary. The sword and dagger are for fighting even "to the knife;" and the short drawers are to give the body freedom in fighting, by keeping it clear from the entanglement of long garments. Whoever omits to carry about him any one of these five objects cannot be a true Sikh.

Sikhs are strictly enjoined to reject both the Hindū and the Muhammadan sacred books, to reject the authority of the scholars and expounders of those faiths, to abstain from visiting their sacred places or joining in their ceremonies, and never to wear any of their distinguishing marks. A Sikh is never to salute one who is not a Sikh; and if he salute a Musalman or shave his head like a Hindū, he is worthy of hell. A Sikh must never smoke tobacco or drink spirituous liquors; he may, however, intoxicate himself with *bhang* as often as he likes. He must never turn his face away from the Guru. All the ceremonies of his life, such as birth, marriage, and death, must be performed with passages from the *Adi Granth* and the *Daswen Pādshāhi*, and from no other book. He must be strictly truthful, kind to the poor, and abstain from false dealing, slandering, and fornication. He is never to uncover his head, or to covet the wife or wealth of another man; and when he dies, it is not good

to cast his ashes into the Ganges, as is the custom of the Hindûs, but to throw them anywhere in the neighbourhood of Amritsar.

These were the principles of Sikhism at the time of the last of the ten Gurus. Since then the disciples of Nanak have approached nearer to Hindûism, and have repeatedly made pilgrimages to Haridwâr, and have done other things which would have shocked their ancestors of two hundred years ago. At the present day, although still preserving their dress and separate organization, they are considered almost identifiable in ideas with the Hindû community.

Such, then, is the philosophy and such is the history of Sikhism. It began in simplicity and large-hearted tolerance, on the one noble principle the unity of God and the brotherhood of man; it passed into sectarianism and a political organization based on hatred of Muhammadans; and has ended by sliding almost insensibly back to the superstition and mythology of the Hindûism it was intended to reform.

During recent years a desire to revive the fading glories of Sikhism has begun to manifest itself in the Panjâb; and the Khâlsâ is now laying the foundation of an organized system of instruction with the object of giving the members of their fraternity a scholarly knowledge of their sacred books, and also enlarging their minds generally. In these praiseworthy efforts the Sikhs will receive the cordial co-operation of every right-thinking Englishman; for it is much to be hoped that this manly form of faith will regain the simplicity and vitality with which it was endowed by its noble-hearted Founder.

## JEWISH ETHICS.

BY THE REV. MORRIS JOSEPH.

THE final aim of religion is morality. This is the central truth of Judaism. In this respect Jewish doctrine differs from Hinduism, which makes ritual purity and spiritual ecstasy the *summum bonum*, from the religion of Islam, whose first and last word is "Allah is God, and Mohammed is His Prophet," from Christianity, which sets faith above works, and declares belief to be the condition precedent to salvation. In every stage of its development Judaism has taught that faith and ritual are but the paths to righteousness, and that far higher than obedience to the ceremonial law, higher even than the possession of theological truth, is purity of heart and holiness of life.

The keynote of this exalted teaching is struck by the Pentateuch itself. "Ye shall be holy," the Israelite is admonished in the nineteenth chapter of Leviticus; "for I, the Lord your God, am holy."<sup>1</sup> And the typical precept which is used to illustrate this general formula is a purely ethical one: "Ye shall fear every man his mother, and his father."<sup>2</sup> Certainly, this specific maxim is immediately followed in its turn by a law relating to sacrifice; but of the many precepts contained in this one chapter, so large a majority deal with morals, that it is impossible to doubt that it is conduct, and not ritual, upon which the Lawgiver would lay the chief stress.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, the eighteenth chapter of Leviticus contains the injunction: "Ye shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man do he shall live by them; I am the Lord."<sup>4</sup> And, as the succeeding passage indicates, these statutes, by doing which man is to live, are those which aim at the suppression of sensuality and vice.

Elsewhere the Pentateuch plainly indicates the value of the sacrificial rite. It is the means, not the end—useful as an expression of inward emotion, useless if it be disjoined from rectitude of life. Before the sin-offering can be brought the sinner must confess his transgression—nay, more, if he has stolen

<sup>1</sup> Lev. xix. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 3.

<sup>3</sup> See Midrash Rabbah on the Passage.

<sup>4</sup> Lev. xviii. 5

he must make restitution.<sup>1</sup> It is only when he has done this that his sacrifice is accepted and he may count on being forgiven. And the theme is taken up by prophet and psalmist. "The sacrifices of God are a contrite spirit."<sup>2</sup> If sinners would be at one with their Father in Heaven they must rend their hearts and not their garments;<sup>3</sup> if they would have their prayers answered they must "cease to do evil," they must "seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow;"<sup>4</sup> if their fasting is to be effective they must loose the bonds of wickedness and let the oppressed go free.<sup>5</sup> No wonder, then, that in their sublime pictures of the Golden Age, the prophets of Israel find no place for ceremonial religion. The gracious figures of Peace and Righteousness and Brotherly Love monopolize the canvas. In the last days God is to judge between many peoples and reprove strong nations afar off; "and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."<sup>6</sup> And in yet another passage describing the universal peace which is to sway men's hearts in the good time that is coming, it is figuratively declared that "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."<sup>7</sup>

It is true that one element in this glorious dream is that the knowledge of God will overflow the whole earth with its life-giving waters; but the manifestations and results of that knowledge are to consist in the perfect peace, the confident trust in each other's goodness, which is to reign among men. According to the prophet Jeremiah, indeed, the knowledge of the Lord is but another name for acts of righteousness and love. "Did not thy father," he reminds the wicked king of Judah, "do judgment and justice? He judged the cause of the poor and needy. Was not this to know Me? saith the Lord."<sup>8</sup> Let him who would boast, elsewhere exclaims the same prophet in the name of God, glory not in his power or his riches, but "in understanding and knowing Me, that I am the Lord that exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord."<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lev. vi. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Psalm li. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Joel ii. 13.

<sup>4</sup> Isa. i. 17.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* lviii. 6.

<sup>6</sup> Micah iv. 3, 4; compare Isa ii. 4.

<sup>7</sup> Isa. xi. 6-9.

<sup>8</sup> Jer. xxii. 15, 16.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* ix. 23, 24.

So, too, the Talmud declares in its turn that "humility supersedes all the sacrifices."<sup>1</sup> "He who devotes himself to the mere study of religion," it continues, "without engaging in works of mercy and love, is like one who has no God."<sup>2</sup> Religious contemplation, it teaches further, is only commendable when it goes hand in hand with active morality. "Only the union of the two can make sin forgotten."<sup>3</sup> "The aim of wisdom," it says again, "is amendment and good deeds."<sup>4</sup> Bachya, a famous Jewish teacher of the eleventh century, in his "Duties of the Heart,"<sup>5</sup> compares the Scriptures to a ball of silk composed of threads of three different qualities. The historical passages are lowest in the scale of value; next comes the ceremonial law; last and highest of all are the spiritual and moral truths. Even Maimonides,<sup>6</sup> though, under the influence of Aristotle, he makes the philosophic life the highest good, yet joins with it, as part of the ideal, that knowledge of God which is, in effect, but a synonym for all the virtues.<sup>7</sup>

Nor is it only obedience to the ceremonial law or the attainment of spiritual calm which, according to Judaism, is surpassed by moral excellence. The right conduct of everyday life transcends in importance even right belief. Theology must yield the first place to morals. More than once the Biblical writers epitomize the whole duty of man, and the summary in every case is either mainly or exclusively ethical. Need I remind you of Psalm xv., where the ideal man—he who is worthy to dwell in God's holy hill—is described as he that walketh uprightly, that speaketh the truth in his heart, that slandereth not with his tongue, that despiseth the vile, that sweareth to his own hurt and changeth not? Or need I quote the fine saying of Micah?<sup>8</sup>—"He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Hillel, the great Talmudic sage, who preceded Jesus by some seventy years, also gives a summary of the Israelite's duty. To the heathen who asks to be taught Judaism while he stands on one foot, he replies, "What is displeasing to thee do not to thy fellow-man; this is the whole law, the rest is but commentary."<sup>9</sup> "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself"—this, another Rabbin—Akiba—in a similar spirit, declares to be the very

<sup>1</sup> Sotah 5b.

<sup>2</sup> Abodah Zarah 16b.

<sup>3</sup> Aboth ii. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Berachot 17a.

<sup>5</sup> At the end of the Introduction.

<sup>6</sup> 12th century.

<sup>7</sup> For a masterly analysis of Maimonides' ethical system see "Die Ethik des Maimonides," by Dr. David Rosin (Breslau: 1876).

<sup>8</sup> Micah vi. 8.

<sup>9</sup> Sabbath 31a.

quintessence of Jewish teaching.<sup>1</sup> Yet a third sage finds the vital principle of Judaism in the words, "This is the book of the generations of Adam"<sup>2</sup>—a passage which, affirming the common brotherhood of all mankind, teaches that the moral law should be as wide as humanity.<sup>3</sup> And finally, as though to express in the most striking manner the extent to which rectitude of life towers above mere belief, the Talmud affirms that the heathen who observes the moral law is the equal of the high priest,<sup>4</sup> and that every good man, no matter what his creed may be, is sure of Heaven.<sup>5</sup> The old, much misunderstood Rabbins, then, were clearly at one with Pope :

"For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight ;  
His can't be wrong whose life is in the right."<sup>6</sup>

You will not conclude, of course, that Judaism is nothing but a collection of moral axioms, or that the Jews are simply a society for ethical culture. Judaism without a creed would obviously be a contradiction in terms—an impossibility. It is superfluous to insist upon this point when the Bible, which, from beginning to end, is one long sermon about God, lies open before you all. Every teacher in Israel has necessarily emphasized the importance of belief both as an embodiment of the truth and as a powerful stimulus and support to moral effort. But, while Judaism declares that faith is the essential basis of ethics, it makes ethics and not faith the ultimate goal. The Psalmist<sup>7</sup> sets the Lord continually before him, but only because he knows that when God is at his right hand he will not be moved—his moral stability will be assured. "Acknowledge Him," cries the wise man in Proverbs, "in all thy ways, and He will make thy paths straight."<sup>8</sup> But the straightening of the path, the life that is "in the right," is the chief thing to be desired. The whole truth is pithily summed up by the Talmud : "Without religion there can be no true morality ; without morality there can be no true religion."<sup>9</sup>

Let us now attempt to catch a glimpse—though, owing to the vast extent of the subject it must necessarily be a very imperfect glimpse—of the nature of that moral teaching which occupies so large a place in the Jewish system. The very highest standard of conduct is laid down—the very noblest motive is appealed to. "Ye shall be holy for I, the Lord your God, am holy." In striving after righteousness the Israelite is to set before his eyes a Divine ideal. The ways of God to man are to be the type of

<sup>1</sup> Siphrah, *Kedoshim* iv. 12

<sup>2</sup> Gen. v. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Siphrah, *Kedoshim*, iv. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Baba Kama 38a.

<sup>5</sup> Synhedrin 105a. Compare Maimonides : *Hilc. Teshubah*, iii. 5.

<sup>6</sup> Essay on Man, iii. 305.

<sup>7</sup> Psalm xvi. 8.

<sup>8</sup> Prov. iii. 6.

<sup>9</sup> Aboth iii. 21.

what the ways of men to each other should be. God "doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment. Love ye, therefore, the stranger."<sup>1</sup> Nor is this imitation of God the sole incentive held out. The command to be holy for God is holy, includes also a warning against a moral degradation which snaps the links that bind man, who is created in the Divine image, to his Maker. Through moral impurity, as well as through physical uncleanness, the Divine Presence, which is in the midst of the camp, is banished, and God turns away from the transgressor. No more powerful expression for the disturbance of the relations between man and his Creator can be found than that which declares that God hides His face from the sinner.<sup>2</sup> And just as transgression estranges the guilty one from his heavenly Father, so to repent is to go back to Him—to be united with Him again—to mend the links that iniquity has broken. "*Return, O Israel, unto the Lord thy God, for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity.*"<sup>3</sup> It would be impossible to conceive a more forcible or more beautiful description of the debasement wrought by sin, or of the ennoblement which penitence is to achieve.

God, then, is to be the pattern by which men are to shape their lives, estrangement from Him—a falling away from the high standard of purity He is ever setting them—the one great consequence of wrongdoing which is to act as their chief deterrent. And thus we are face to face with the motives to which Judaism appeals in its exhortations to virtue. John Stuart Mill charges Religion with pandering to men's self-interest, to the neglect of those nobler aspirations which it should be its aim to arouse and develop.<sup>4</sup> It is not a fair accusation. The Pentateuch promises worldly recompense to the worldly-minded—to the spiritually youthful, whom the picture of comparatively sordid delights alone can influence. But it does not forget the nobler spirits whom the admonition to love God with all their heart and with all their soul and with all their might suffices to kindle with an enthusiasm for duty.<sup>5</sup> This love of God, which is at once the inspiration and the exceeding great reward of the good man, becomes, notably in the case of the Psalmist, an all-absorbing passion. It manifests itself in the rapture with which he ponders the Divine commands. "Oh how I love thy law," he cries; "it is my meditation all the day long."<sup>6</sup> The same single-hearted

<sup>1</sup> Deut. x. 18, 19. Compare Siphre on Deut. xi. 22.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* xxxi. 18, xxxii. 20; Isa. i. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Hosea xiv. 1. Compare Deut. iv. 30, xxx. 2.

<sup>4</sup> See his Essay on the "Utility of Religion."

<sup>5</sup> Deut. vi. 5.

<sup>6</sup> Psalm cxix. 97.



devotion is expressed again in that rejoicing in the Lord, of which the Psalms are full. "Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God, my exceeding joy."<sup>1</sup> It is a joy, too, which the storms of life cannot quench, which, because it is independent of worldly recompense, survives the most searching trials and disasters. "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."<sup>2</sup> In like manner the Talmud, despite its frequent references to the bliss of Eternal Life, does not omit to warn us that the highest form of duty is that which is performed for its own sake, without thought of recompense. "Be not like servants that serve the master for wages; let your motive be only reverence for heaven."<sup>3</sup> The good man, the Rabbins further teach, finds his supreme delight in the Divine commands themselves, not in thinking of the reward that obedience will bring.<sup>4</sup>

A distinguishing characteristic of Jewish ethical teaching is its reasonableness and moderation. It is marked by no excess, no extravagance. It demands nothing that is impossible for the individual, nothing that is inconsistent with the well-being, nay, the existence, of society. Something more than mere almsgiving, which is too often self-pity masquerading in the garb of mercy, is recommended by the Pentateuch. Careful study of the condition and real needs of the poor—a rarer and more difficult task—this is expressly enjoined. The rich, according to Deuteronomy,<sup>5</sup> are to open their hand, not for the purpose of giving mere doles, but of lending the poor man "sufficient for his need." And notice that lending rather than giving is here recommended. The self-respect of the deserving poor is not to be wounded in the attempt to rob poverty of its sting. Similarly the Talmud declares that loans are preferable to almsgiving,<sup>6</sup> and Maimonides, in distinguishing the merits of various benevolent deeds, assigns highest place to those considerate acts which aim at destroying the pauperism, and restoring to the poor their lost independence.<sup>7</sup>

But, while there is no virtue more highly appraised or more frequently commended than benevolence, it is the benevolence that is not exercised at the expense of any other virtue. If mercy ought to season justice, justice ought equally to season mercy. The cry of the oppressed, we are warned, sounds loudest in God's

<sup>1</sup> Psalm xliii. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Hab. iii. 17, 18.

<sup>3</sup> Aboth i. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Abodah Zarah 19b.

<sup>5</sup> Deut. xv. 8.

<sup>6</sup> Sabbath 63a.

<sup>7</sup> Hilec Mat. Anyim x. 7-14.

ear;<sup>1</sup> but the judge is cautioned not to favour the poor man out of regard for his poverty.<sup>2</sup> "Justice, justice, shalt thou pursue;"<sup>3</sup>—and the command is the keystone of the entire fabric of the social ethics taught by the Bible.<sup>4</sup>

In short, Jewish ethical teaching is singularly free from mere sentimentalism.<sup>5</sup> The virtues that are praised are commended, not because they are intrinsically beautiful, but because they either ennoble the character or add to the common stock of human happiness. Æstheticism as the basis of morals is a notion which the Jew left to the ancient philosophers; a maudlin, hysterical morality he leaves to some more modern folks. His is a healthy, a robust, a practical ethic. Meekness that takes the form of useless self-abasement, the "pride that apes humility," is out of the range of his sympathies. Idleness, though it has the odour of sanctity—self-imposed suffering endured for no reason in particular—he abhors. He has no benediction for misery. His aim is to banish it from every heart, not to revel in it as a luxury if it has invaded his own. And so there is a cheerfulness running through all the ethical teaching of Judaism which is as far removed from the austerity of the cloister as it is from latter-day pessimism. It is brought to a focus in the Talmudic saying that the Spirit of God rests not on the idle or the woebegone, but on those who do their duty and are glad.<sup>6</sup>

The whole Bible is one great picture of activity. It has no place for monks or nuns; its men and women seek amid the struggles and trials of the world for the discipline that leads to moral perfection. Think only of that exquisite description of the virtuous woman at the end of Proverbs. The beauty of the picture lies not in any abstract loveliness, but in its reasonableness, in its telling a tale that every heart, every common-sense mind, applauds. It is a picture, not of a saint, but of what is equally noble and far more useful—a true woman. "She spreadeth out her hand to the poor;" "the law of kindness is on her tongue;" but "strength and dignity are her clothing," and "she looketh well to the ways of her household." She scorns to eat the "bread of idleness." And it is she that is deemed worthy to be called a "God-fearing woman"—one whose "works shall praise her in the gates."

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xxii. 23.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* xxiii. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Deut. xvi. 20.

<sup>4</sup> A warning against excess, even in ethics, is to be discerned in the striking Talmudic passage (Jer. Chagigah ii. 1): "The Law may be likened to two roads, one of fire, the other of snow. To follow the one is to perish by the fire; to follow the other is to die of the cold. The middle path alone is safe." Compare Aristotle's Doctrine of the Mean.

<sup>5</sup> Maimonides cautions us against false pity. Compassion for the evildoer is cruelty to Society. "Moré Nebuchim," iii. 39.

<sup>6</sup> Sabbath 30b.

"Seest thou a man diligent in his work? he shall stand before Kings."<sup>1</sup> The dignity of honest labour could not be more forcibly expressed. The wise man in Proverbs reserves his fiercest indignation, his most biting sarcasm, for the sluggard, with his plea for a little more slumber,<sup>2</sup> his excuses about the lion in the street.<sup>3</sup> And thê Talmud once more is the echo of Holy Writ. The Rabbins insist upon the glory of studying the Law, with almost wearisome iteration. And yet these very men were the most enthusiastic preachers of the Gospel of Work that the world has ever seen. "The study of the Law," they said, "that does not go hand-in-hand with active industry is doomed to failure."<sup>4</sup> "Great is labour," they also taught, "for it honours the labourer."<sup>5</sup> The saying recalls Mrs. Browning's admonition:

". . . Get work, get work,  
Be sure 'tis better than what you work to get."<sup>6</sup>

"Flay a carcase in the streets," continues the Talmud, "and take thy wage, and say not I am a great man, and the occupation is beneath me."<sup>7</sup> "Greater even than the God-fearing man is he who lives by his toil."<sup>8</sup> "He who does not teach his son a handicraft-trade virtually teaches him to steal"<sup>9</sup>—the Talmud clearly anticipated the modern agitation in favour of technical teaching. The Rabbins preached, but practised too. In the schools they were the greatest of the great; in the world many of them followed the humblest callings. They were wood-cutters, shoemakers, masons, mere day-labourers—everything but idlers.<sup>10</sup>

Manliness—this is the dominant note of the Jewish ethic. "It is a good sign," the Talmud characteristically remarks, "when a man walks with head erect."<sup>11</sup> One is reminded of Longfellow's "Village Blacksmith," who "looks the whole world in the face." The same idea is discernible in the old Levitical law which warns us against hating our brother in our heart.<sup>12</sup> If we have a grievance against him we are to go to him in a straightforward way and tell him so to his face. "Thou shalt surely rebuke thy neighbour."<sup>13</sup> What a host of fatal misunderstandings would be prevented if this salutary command were generally obeyed!

But while so much emphasis is laid on a robust morality, it must not be supposed that the gentler virtues are overlooked. The crowning excellence of Moses, Israel's Lawgiver and greatest prophet, in his meekness.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, Hillel—perhaps the most

<sup>1</sup> Prov. xxii. 29.

<sup>4</sup> Aboth ii. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Baba Bathra 110a.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* vi. 10.

<sup>5</sup> Nedarim 49b.

<sup>8</sup> Berachot 8a.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* xxvi. 13.

<sup>6</sup> "Aurora Leigh," Book iii.

<sup>9</sup> Kiddushin 29a.

<sup>10</sup> The passages in the Talmud relating to Work have been collected by Dr. Seligman Meyer: "Arbeit und Handwerk im Talmud," Berlin, 1878.

<sup>11</sup> Aboth d' R. Nathan.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Lev. xix. 17.

<sup>14</sup> Num. xii. 3.

eminent of the Rabbins—is chiefly praised because of his patience and humility. Centuries before the Sermon on the Mount was preached, the Psalmist declared that “the meek shall inherit the earth.”<sup>1</sup> Be the oppressed, says the Talmud, rather than the oppressor.<sup>2</sup> He that is reviled, yet answereth not, attains to a glory like that of the sun at the zenith.<sup>3</sup> And so, too, with the virtue of forgiveness. “Thou shalt not avenge nor bear a grudge,”<sup>4</sup> is one of the oldest precepts of the Hebrew Scriptures. The Israelite is expressly warned against refusing to help his enemy in his hour of need—when, for example, he seeks his ass that has gone astray, or when his ox has fallen under its burden.<sup>5</sup> “Rejoice not,” cries the wise man, “when thy enemy falleth.”<sup>6</sup> “If,” he adds elsewhere, “thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink.”<sup>7</sup> As for the Talmud—to give one typical instance—it tells<sup>8</sup> how, stung by the incessant persecution of his neighbours, a famous Rabbi hurls an execration at his tormentors. His wife rebukes him. The Psalmist, she points out, prays not for the destruction of the sinner, but for the extinction of *sin*. “Let *iniquity*,” it is written, “cease from the earth, and then the wicked will be no more.”<sup>9</sup>

And this story serves also to illustrate the attitude of Judaism to Woman. The Talmudic sages who could imagine and describe a Rabbi being taught his duty by his wife, could not, in spite of some of their maxims on the subject being racy of the Eastern soil, and redolent of the spirit of the age, have had a low idea of female worth.<sup>10</sup> Akiba, too, the master of a legion of disciples, the martyr for the cause of Judaism, owed his eminence and his fame to his wife.<sup>11</sup> She first inspired him with the enthusiasm which made him a teacher in Israel. She has her Biblical counterparts in a Miriam, a Deborah, a Huldah, an Esther—in the typical virtuous woman I spoke of just now. The Rabbins would not have understood the expression “single blessedness.” “He who has no wife,” they taught, “lives without happiness, without religion, without blessing.”<sup>12</sup> In their opinion, clearly, marriage was *not* a failure; but then they were old-fashioned people who were not fortunate enough to live in the nineteenth century. “The unmarried man,” they declared, “is not a complete man,”<sup>13</sup> an idea which Shakespeare has expressed more fully:—

<sup>1</sup> Psalm xxxvii. 11.<sup>4</sup> Lev. xix. 18.<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* xxv. 21<sup>2</sup> Sabbath 88b.<sup>5</sup> Gen. xxiii. 4, 5.<sup>8</sup> Berachot 10a.<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*<sup>6</sup> Prov. xxiv. 17.<sup>9</sup> Psalm civ. 35.<sup>10</sup> The harsh sayings about the sex, which are occasionally to be found in the Talmud, are matched by the “fierce invectives” of the Church Fathers. See Lecky · “Hist. of European Morals,” vol. ii., cap 5.<sup>11</sup> Nedarim 50a.<sup>12</sup> Bereshith Rabbah xvi<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

"He is the half-part of a blessed man,  
Left to be finished by such as she;  
And she a fair divided excellence,  
Whose fulness of perfection lies in him."<sup>1</sup>

The utmost tenderness and consideration is enjoined on the husband. "The tears of the injured wife are counted in heaven."<sup>2</sup>

I trust the sex will not think me uncomplimentary in passing direct from Woman to animals. There is a connecting link between the two in the tendency of vile men to take advantage of their comparative defencelessness. The claims of the lower animals on human pity and consideration have been strangely overlooked by most ethical systems, not excluding Christianity. "In the range and circle of duties," remarks Mr. Lecky, "inculcated by the early Fathers those to animals had no place. This is indeed," he continues, "the one form of humanity which appears more prominently in the Old Testament than in the New. The many beautiful traces of it in the former . . . gave way before an ardent philanthropy which regarded human interests as the one end, and the relations of man to his Creator as the one question, of life, and dismissed somewhat contemptuously as an idle sentimentalism, notions of duty to animals."<sup>3</sup> The only religious system, I believe, besides Judaism, which has given a prominent place to this duty, is that which is attributed to Zoroaster.<sup>4</sup> I need hardly cite the passages in the Hebrew Bible which insist upon a humane treatment of the brute. The precepts forbidding the muzzling of the ox when threshing,<sup>5</sup> the slaughter of the dam and the young on the same day,<sup>6</sup> and the taking of the mother-bird with the nestlings;<sup>7</sup> the command which insists upon domesticated animals sharing with their master the rest of the Sabbath day;<sup>8</sup> the saying in Proverbs that the righteous man regardeth the life of his beast<sup>9</sup>—these are familiar to you all. The Rabbins enforced the duty with equal emphasis. Kindness to animals becomes, in the Talmud, the basis of a whole code of laws. The Rabbinical prescriptions regulating the mode of slaughtering animals intended for food are in part due to a desire to prevent the slightest unnecessary suffering.<sup>10</sup> A great Rabbi is said to have been punished with long and continued physical pain because when a calf which was about to be killed, ran to him bleating for protection, he roughly repulsed the animal, exclaiming, "Go, that is thy destiny."<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, in a beautiful legend which

<sup>1</sup> *King John*, Act ii., scene 1.

<sup>4</sup> The Vendidad.

<sup>7</sup> Deut. xxii. 6.

<sup>2</sup> See Yebamoth 62b.

<sup>5</sup> Deut. xxv. 4.

<sup>8</sup> Exod. xx. 10.

<sup>3</sup> "Hist. of Europ. Morals," vol. ii. cap. 4.

<sup>6</sup> Lev. xxii. 28.

<sup>9</sup> Prov. xii. 10.

<sup>10</sup> The Israelite is enjoined to feed his animals before sitting down to his own meal. See Gittin 62a.

<sup>11</sup> Baba Metzia 85a.

the poet Coleridge has paraphrased, the Rabbins tell how Moses, while he is still Jethro's shepherd, seeks out a stray lamb and tenderly carries the tired creature in his arms back to the fold, and how a voice from Heaven cries, "Thou art worthy to be My people's pastor."<sup>1</sup> This sympathy for the dumb animals is all the more remarkable because the Rabbins lived in an age when, cruelty to both man and beast was commonly condoned. The terrible scenes in the Roman arena are only too clear an indication of the inhumanity which prevailed in the civilized world during the Talmudic period. It is true that philosophers like Plutarch condemned the cruelties of the amphitheatre, and even taught the positive duty of kindness to animals. But a doctrine tardily preached by a handful of theorists whom men generally agreed to ignore, was taught and practically enforced by the Jewish Sages, inspired by the ancient law of the Bible. The gladiatorial shows they declared to be an abomination, they went even further, and forbade the chase.<sup>2</sup> Had they lived to-day they might have founded the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals; but they would not have sanctioned coursing or tolerated a fox-hunt.

This prohibition of cruelty to animals originates as much in the desire to prevent the moral debasement of the man as in the anxiety to save his possible victim from suffering. Judaism, indeed, is as strong in its subjective as in its objective morality. It condemns evil thoughts and evil desires, because of their degrading effects upon the mind and the soul, as severely as it stigmatises evil acts. "Give me thy heart, my son,"<sup>3</sup> is the constant cry of Jewish ethics. Full of significance is the warning against the mere feeling of covetousness which is embodied in the Decalogue side by side with denunciations of the most deadly sins. A Lord Amberley,<sup>4</sup> could contemptuously question the utility of the warning; but a keener and a juster critic like Ewald clearly discerned its necessity.<sup>5</sup> "Look," says Ruskin, too, "look into the history of any civilized nations; analyze the lives and thoughts of their nobles, priests, merchants, and men of luxurious life. Every other temptation is at last concentrated in this; pride, and lust, and envy, and anger, all give up their strength to avarice."<sup>6</sup> In the same way the Israelite is cautioned against nourishing hatred, even though it be unaccompanied by any overt act.<sup>7</sup> And the man who, according to the Psalmist, is worthy of standing in God's holy place, is he whose hands are clean but whose heart

<sup>1</sup> Shemoth Rabbah, Cap. II.

<sup>2</sup> Abodah Zarah, 18b.

<sup>3</sup> Prov. xxiii. 26.

<sup>4</sup> "Analysis of Religious Belief," vol. ii. 246.

<sup>5</sup> "Geschichte des Volkes Israel," vol. ii., p. 153.

<sup>6</sup> "Ethics of the Dust," p. 15.

<sup>7</sup> Lev. xix. 17. See Siphrah on the passage. Compare Zech. vii. 10; viii. 17.

also is pure.<sup>1</sup> "What the Almighty chiefly desires," says the Talmud in its turn, "is the heart."<sup>2</sup> "As soon," it teaches elsewhere, "as the thought of sin has entered the mind, the guilt has already commenced."<sup>3</sup> With evil desire, it further points out, a fierce battle must be fought until the victory is gained.<sup>4</sup> And, finally, to quote one of those paradoxes in which the Rabbins delighted: "Sinful thoughts are worse than sin itself."<sup>5</sup> Nor is the rectitude to be aimed at simply negative; it is not to consist in the mere defeat of evil longings—in a moral vacuum. A positive striving after goodness and nobility of life is praised as the highest effort. In the ascending scale of virtue the Talmud places above the avoidance of sin and above humility that absolute purity of character which, it declares, alone merits to have the gift of the Holy Spirit.<sup>6</sup> Professor Sidgwick, then, is less fair or less acute than usual when he affirms, to the disparagement of Judaism, that "the contrast with the 'righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees' has always served to mark the requirements of 'inwardness' as a distinctive feature of the Christian code—an inwardness not merely negative, tending to the repression of vicious desires as well as vicious acts, but also involving a positive rectitude of the inner state of the soul."<sup>7</sup>

One other characteristic of Jewish ethics remains to be noticed. The notion that Judaism teaches a narrow morality, to be practised for the exclusive benefit of the Jew, is as erroneous as the cognate idea that the God of the Hebrew Bible is a mere tribal God. It is impossible to explain away the stubborn fact that the old Mosaic Code contains the maxim, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;" and that, as though to prevent any misunderstanding of the words, it almost immediately repeats the command in reference to the stranger.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, the poor man is to be liberally and considerably helped, even though he be a stranger or a sojourner; he is the Israelite's "brother."<sup>9</sup> Even the Egyptian, Israel's original enemy, his taskmaster, his enslaver, is not to be oppressed.<sup>10</sup> He is a stranger—isolated, helpless; and "ye know," adds the Law, "the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt."<sup>11</sup> The ancient wrong is to be forgotten; all that is to be remembered is the Egyptian's need, his possible suffering. But let us turn to the Rabbins. To rob a Gentile is declared to be even worse than robbing a Jew, for besides being immoral it disgraces Judaism.<sup>12</sup> Nor is it only positive dishonesty, but deception, too, which is denounced,

<sup>1</sup> Psalm xxiii. 3, 4.

<sup>2</sup> Synhed. 106b.

<sup>3</sup> Midrash on Num. v. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Berachot 5a.

<sup>5</sup> Yoma 29a.

<sup>6</sup> Abodah Zarah, 20b.

<sup>7</sup> "History of Ethics," p. 112.

<sup>8</sup> Lev. xix. 34.

<sup>9</sup> Lev. xxv. 35, 36.

<sup>10</sup> Deut. xxiii. 7.

<sup>11</sup> Exod. xxii. 9.

<sup>12</sup> Tosefta B. Kama, cap. 10.

whoever its victim may be.<sup>1</sup> The duty of kindness is made equally universal. We are bound, the Talmud teaches, to relieve the poor, to visit the sick, to bury the dead, without distinction of race or religion.<sup>2</sup> When, according to the Rabbinical legend, the Egyptians were engulfed in the waters of the Red Sea the angels desired to sing praises to God. The Almighty rebuked them. "My children, the work of My Hands, are perishing; this is not the time for psalmody."<sup>3</sup> A Talmudic Rabbi was accustomed after his public devotions to offer up this prayer:—"May it be Thy will, O God, that no man may be my enemy, and that no enmity towards any man may take root in my heart." Similarly, a modern Jewish Catechism teaches that it is our duty to say every day when we rise, and before we lie down, and before we commence our prayers:—"Behold I am about to obey the command, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' Forgive, O Lord, him that injures me."<sup>4</sup> As for the Rabbins of the Middle Ages, I might quote a long string of specific injunctions of the most precise and emphatic character, in order still further to illustrate the catholicity of Jewish ethics.<sup>5</sup> I prefer, however, to cite some maxims of these teachers on other subjects as well, because they will give you an idea of what Jewish ethical doctrine generally was at a time when morality was not the world's strong point, when, moreover, persecution was doing its best to crush out every noble aspiration from the Jewish soul.

The following is from a work of the eleventh century.<sup>6</sup> "Speak the truth; be modest; live on the coarsest fare rather than be dependent on others. Shun evil companions; be not like the flies which swarm in foul places. Rejoice not when thine enemy falls; be not both witness and judge; avoid anger, the heritage of fools." The following maxims are two centuries later.<sup>7</sup> "No crown surpasses humility, no monument a good name, no gain the performance of duty. The good man leads others in the right path, loves his neighbour, gives his charity in secret, does right from pure motives and for God's sake; he indulges in no idle talk, he is free from the lust of the eye; he is reviled yet answers not. He shuts his heart against all envy save that excited by another's virtues; he makes the righteous his example; he deceives no one by word or deed." A book<sup>8</sup> belonging to nearly the same age contains these aphorisms. "Serve not thy Maker because thou hopest for Paradise, but from pure love of Him and His commands.

<sup>1</sup> Chulin 94a.<sup>2</sup> Gittin 61a.<sup>3</sup> Mechilta on Exod. xv.<sup>4</sup> Johnson's "Mosaic Religion," translated by Isaac Leeser, p. 106.<sup>5</sup> The whole question of the attitude of Judaism to the Gentile is ably discussed by Dr. Grünebaum: "Die Sittenlehre des Judenthums," Mannheim, 1867.<sup>6</sup> "Orchot Chayim," by R. Elieser b. Isaac.<sup>7</sup> "Rokeach" by R. Elasar of Worms.<sup>8</sup> "Sepher Chassidim."



Give thy life for His service, like a soldier in battle. Deceive no one, neither Jew nor Gentile; quarrel with no one, whatever his creed. If one would borrow of thee, and thou hast doubts of being repaid, do not lie, saying thou hast no money. On him that oppresses the poor or buys stolen goods, no blessing rests. If a murderer would take refuge with thee, consent not to hide him, yea, though he be a Jew. Honour the virtuous Gentile, not the irreligious Israelite. In morals Jew and Christian, as a rule, are alike. On those that clip the coin, on usurers, on such as have false weights and measures, or who are in any wise dishonest in business, there is no blessing. The worst failing is ingratitude; it must not be shown even to the brute. More guilty even than those who are cruel to animals are the employers that ill-treat their servants. Pay thy debts before thou givest alms. If one has cheated or injured thee in any way, let not revenge tempt thee to do the same to him." Here again are a few sayings chosen almost at random from various writers: "The alms given in health are gold; in illness, silver; left by will, copper." "Put no one to the blush in public; misuse thy power against no man." "Beware of drunkenness, and thou wilt not have to repent of shameful behaviour." "A man's virtues are pearls, and the thread on which they are strung is the fear of God; break the thread, and the pearls are lost one by one. But without morality there can be no real performance of religious duty."<sup>1</sup>

And thus we come back to our starting-point: Moral excellence is the essence of religion.

That Judaism should so persistently have taught this grand truth becomes all the more remarkable when it is remembered that the history of the Jew is an almost unbroken record of suffering. The world seems to have conspired to thrust him back by relentless persecution into the arms of formalism, to restrict the field for the play of his higher instincts to the external rites of religion. Shut out for many a weary century from intercourse with all men save the members of his own race, imprisoned in Ghettos, hunted down, hated, and reviled, it would have been no marvel if he had fixed his thoughts exclusively on the ceremonialism of the "Scribes and the Pharisees," if he had shown no feeling whatever for a lofty ethical ideal, nay, if he had nursed in his heart and practised in his life, sentiments of positive malevolence towards the world that so deeply wronged him. Well, indeed, might he have pleaded human nature as his justification. "Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? Fed with the

<sup>1</sup> All the foregoing extracts are translated from Zunz: "Zur Geschichte und Literatur."

same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge?"<sup>1</sup>

But Shylock is "the Jew that Shakespeare drew." He is not the Jew of real life, even in the Middle Ages, stained as their story is with the hot tears, nay, the very heart's blood, of the martyred race. The mediæval Jew did *not* take vengeance on his cruel foes. Nay, more than this, with a sublime magnanimity which rivals in grandeur, and far surpasses in duration, the noble patience ascribed to Jesus on the Cross, he could actually preach and practise the widest benevolence towards his oppressors. Throughout the Middle Ages, when Jews were daily plundered and tortured and done to death "for the glory of God," not a word was breathed against the morality of the victims. They suffered because they were heretics, because they would not juggle with their conscience, and profess a belief that did not live in their souls. The venerable Dr. Döllinger, a critic whose fairness is beyond cavil, has pointed this out.<sup>2</sup> But Jewish ethics soared to still nobler heights. The Jew preserved his integrity in spite of his suffering; but more than this, he forgave—aye, even blessed—its authors. The Jews hunted out of Spain in 1492, were in turn cruelly expelled from Portugal. Some took refuge on the African coast. Eighty years later the descendants of the men who had committed or allowed these enormities were defeated in Africa, whither they had been led by their King, Don Sebastian. Those who were not slain were offered as slaves at Fez to the descendants of the Jewish exiles from Portugal. "The humbled Portuguese nobles," the historian narrates, "were comforted when their purchasers proved to be Jews, for they knew that they had humane hearts."<sup>3</sup> It is in such incidents that the climax of Jewish morality is reached. If the lifelong anguish of Israel excites the most profound pity, only admiration can be yielded to that greatness of soul, which is the fairest gem in his crown of martyrdom.

<sup>1</sup> Shakespeare : *Merchant of Venice*, act. iii., scene 1.

<sup>2</sup> "The Jews in Europe," an Address delivered before the Academy of Sciences in Munich, July, 1881.

<sup>3</sup> Graetz : "Geschichte der Juden," vol. viii., p. 379.

## THE JEWS IN MODERN TIMES.

BY PROFESSOR D. W. MARKS

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IN the lecture I am to deliver, on "The Jews in Modern Times," I start from the period of the Reformation. This important event, with its outburst of intellectual life and its diffusion of new ideas, failed to accomplish in any appreciable degree the alleviation of the status of the Jews of Continental Europe. Their social condition continued intolerable in Protestant, no less than in Roman Catholic, countries—despite the liberal professions of the former, and their loud blast of the right of private judgment. The shedding of their blood had ceased, but they continued still objects of scorn and contempt, and their persecution became even more systematic than in past ages. Nothing was offered them but baptism, and none but the baptized were considered to be within the pale of humanity. In Germany, Austria and Poland, where they were located in large numbers they were excluded from all social intercourse, as well as from scientific and industrial pursuits. The darkness of the fourteenth century rested on them long after the first half of the eighteenth century had passed away. Their schools had fallen into decay, their synagogues were hung with the drapery of mourning and despair, and their pulpits were well nigh mute. To them Europe's science was alien, and Europe's Christianity an abomination. They had imbibed a positive aversion for the language and the alphabets of their tyrants and oppressors, and their ordinary language was a miserable jargon known by the name of *Jüdisch Deutsch*.

At last, however, came relief, and the spirit of modern civilization began to breathe on their petrified forms of social and spiritual life, and to awaken the dormant powers of their mind. When the hour struck for Germany to throw off the dust of barbarism and to proclaim a more human age, Israel aroused himself from his lethargy; and his national civilization, which had never become extinct, revived under the genial influence of the times. Amongst those of Christian sympathizers may be mentioned Councillor von Dohm and the renowned Lessing; but all

the phenomena of that stirring period centred in one man, Moses Mendelssohn, one of the messengers sent by Providence into the world when the time has come "to divide the light from the darkness." He had already attained to eminence as a philosopher and had even successfully disputed the prize with Kant. He now resolved to devote his life to the absorbing object of lifting his brethren in faith out of their social decrepitude and of putting an end to their isolation in thought and feeling from the rest of mankind. He appealed to them by the voice of their cherished Scriptures—a voice to which in all their tribulations they had never been dull—and the lever on which he relied was that of education. As the Jews were then ignorant of the German alphabet he was driven to adopt in his classical German translation of the Bible the square Hebrew character. He opened at Berlin an academy which soon became famous and attracted to its benches many Christian pupils of the highest families for secular instruction. The promiscuous education of Jews and Christians was a bold step in that age of prejudice, but it gave no offence. By degrees the brazen wall, which the antipathies of more than a thousand years had built up, was thrown down, and the hand of mutual fellowship was held out by Christian and Jew. In the presence of the new life mediæval predilections and systems have vanished away, and the Jews have created for themselves new worlds in the realms of civilization, science, and letters. At the present time Jews are to be found in considerable numbers amongst the *savans*, and a large portion of the daily and periodical Press is under their direction.

Now an intellectual change like this could hardly have been brought about without exerting a telling influence on the religious thought and the outward ritual practices of the Jews. The modern cultured Israelite could not mould his mind to the type into which Talmudism had been cast in times when persecution forced the Hebrew race into a state of isolation. Important changes have therefore taken place in the Synagogal economy, as well as in the composition of the prayer book, which once reflected all the painful reminiscences of a martyred people.

Meanwhile the civil emancipation of the Jews in Germany advanced. In 1812 they obtained the right to engage in industrial pursuits, and with this concession the last of the long list of restrictions which had driven them to follow the most humble callings was removed. Later on they were declared citizens and *Ländeskinder*; and at the Congress of Vienna in 1814, a public recognition was made of their patriotic efforts during the War of Independence; and, by an especial article, the Congress pledged itself to secure for them a perfect equality of rights in all the Allied

States. It was long, however, before the pledge was redeemed by Germany and Austria. In Russia it remains still unfulfilled.

There is a very large Jewish population in the Austrian dominions, and until very recently their position was a sad one. No one was considered to have a claim to nationality that remained without the pale of the Roman Catholic Church, and numbers of Jews have been forced into an outward profession of the creed of Rome as the only means of being recognized as citizens and of securing industrial employment. But the battle of Sadowa wrought a great change in the government and accomplished wonders for the rights of conscience. Religious opinion is now perfectly free, and no stain attaches to dissent from the Established Church. Most of the Jews who had gone over to it have come back to the Synagogue, bringing with them occasionally persons of Christian birth, with whom they had formed marriage connections.

The spiritual condition of the Jews in Austria and in Germany is nearly on a par with that of other denominations in those empires. The scepticism of Kant, Hegel, Schelling, Schopenhauer, Fichte, Strauss, and others, has not left the Synagogue, any more than the Church, unscathed. The Jews of the Continent (Russia and Poland excepted) may be divided into two classes, those that *do*, and those that *do not*, observe the ceremonies of their religion; very few of the richer classes belong to the former, most of the poorer classes belong to the latter.

Of all European countries where the Jews sought a shelter from their persecutors, Spain was the one where they especially made their mark. Driven out of Palestine soon after the conversion of Constantine, some of them fled to Arabia, some to the Crimea, and most of them to Spain. In South Arabia, and in the opposite coast of Ethiopia, Christians and Jews strove for supremacy. The Himyar Jewish state eventually succumbed, but some of its chieftains continued independent, and were in possession of their castles at the advent of Mohammed who, at the beginning of his career, desired to make friends with them. The agency of Judaism in the formation of Mohammedanism was quite as important as in the production of Christianity. The views of the world as set forth in the Koran are entirely taken from the Hebrew Scriptures and from the oral traditions.

About the same time a movement began among the Jews in Babylonia, which culminated in a schism. A rabbi, named Anau, imparted form to it, and hence arose what is known as the school of the Karaites, which completely rejected the traditions of the Talmud. The Karaites employed the Arabic language in their polemical treatises, and the Rabbinical Jews soon adopted the

same language for controversy and for general theological purposes. It is indeed remarkable that the Jews should never have become familiar with the Persian language, although they lived side by side with the Zoroastrians more than twelve hundred years. The Jews received many religious notions from the Persians, to whom they communicated few, if any, of their own.

About the time of the origin of Karàism, the kingdom of the Chazars was founded on the Caspian, by the fragments of the army of Attila, then on its march back from Europe to Turkistan.<sup>1</sup> The influence of the Chazars whose kings professed the Jewish religion must have been considerable on the surrounding tribes. The Jewish kingdom collapsed in the beginning of the eleventh century. By that time the Jews in Spain had attained a high degree of literary and scientific importance. They stood as mediators between Moslem and Christian, and without them the benefit of Mohammedan literature would never have come within the reach of Christians. They translated works from the Hebrew and Arabic, and these were further translated into Latin. At the head of these literary labours stands Jehudah ibn Tibbon of Granada, who was followed in the same path by his children and grandchildren. Montpelier, Beziers, Arles, Bagnoles, and the neighbouring cities of Spain and Italy furnished able Jewish scholars. Albertus Magnus and St. Thomas Aquinas studied Aristotle in Latin versions, made from the Hebrew.<sup>2</sup> They also produced independent works of their own. The celebrated philosophical work, *Fons Vitæ*, had been for centuries attributed to a Mohammedan author under the name of *Avicbron*, but by a literary discovery made by the late erudite Dr. Munk, it turned out to be the production of the gifted Solomon ibn Gabirol. It may here be mentioned that the reformation of the Church was influenced by the Jews in two ways: *First*, by the *Kabbala*, which laid a stronghold on the imagination of Christians aspiring to independence of thought. Jews were naturally the interpreters of the Kabbalistic books, but the most effective propagators of the mystic science were Christians. Raymond Sulli, Pico della Mirandola, Reuchlin, Knorr von Rosenroth, and many other minor capacities, wrote for and against the *Kabbala*. *Secondly*, by the revival of Biblical studies which had been almost neglected in the Church since the days of Jerome. For this service the aid of the Jews was indispensable, not only for the purpose of teaching the language, but for opening to the Christian world the stores of Rabbinical literature.

But the sun of prosperity for the Jews in Spain lasted only for a few centuries, from the defeat of the last Gothic king, until the

<sup>1</sup> See *Graetz Geschichte*, vol. v.

<sup>2</sup> See *Munk Mèlanger*, p. 335.

time when the Moorish power was uprooted by the triumph of Ferdinand at Granada. A rigorous persecution followed close on this victory, the Inquisition was established, the axe and the faggot were the doom of all so-called unbelievers, and the Jews who refused to apostatize from their ancestral faith could only escape these penalties by exile. About the same time when Columbus was hoisting sail in search of a new world, upwards of half a million of Jews were cast forth from the land of their birth to encounter all the horrors of banishment and destitution. By far the larger number of them perished—some by shipwreck, some through starvation and fatigue, and not a few fell into the hands of the pirates of Algeria, and closed their lives in the rigour of slavery.

Of those who escaped such perils, many found a shelter in hospitable Holland, where they were suffered to live in comparative ease and to profess outwardly their faith. The gratitude inspired by this humane treatment was singularly displayed by the Jews of Holland when William of Orange was in need of funds to fit out his expedition to England. One of their community placed at the disposal of William two millions of guilders, saying to him: "If you succeed you will no doubt repay the loan; if you fail I am well content to lose it in the cause of religious liberty." The interest evinced by the Jewish refugees in the welfare of the country, and their generous support to all its charitable institutions, secured for them the national good will, and prepared the way for their complete emancipation. They are very numerous in the Dutch provinces, and amongst them are found at the present day, men of European celebrity in every liberal profession and branch of science and literature. They have over sixty schools, authorized by the government, and admirable theological colleges for the training of ministers. Their benevolent institutions are so manifold as to have proved absolutely injurious to self-help and industrial activity. Indiscriminate almsgiving has tended to demoralize the poor, until the irrepressible mendicant of Amsterdam has sunk into the lowest type of the Jewish race. It is not surprising that in the country which gave birth to the renowned Spinoza there should be found amongst the cultured Hebrews, men whose religious opinions do not square with the standard of Rabbinism; but the majority of the Dutch Jews are ultra-Talmudical, and their aversion to modify the Synagogue ritual from the stamp it took during the persecution of the middle ages, and to adapt it to the requirements of the time being, has up to the present proved invincible.

France contains upwards of a hundred thousand Jews, and they are remarkable for their staunch patriotism. They differ from

their ancestors of a bygone age, in so far as they have lost all feeling for the land of the Patriarchs, and they exult in the exclamation, "Notre Zion c'est la France," ignoring completely the old doctrine of a restoration to Palestine. Nor in this respect do they differ much from modern Jews in general, who live at ease and are in the enjoyment of equal rights of citizenship. Just as the Church in the times of its tribulation consoled itself in the belief of the doctrine of the Millennium, so the Synagogue during its dreary centuries of persecution, found comfort in the hope of a restoration to the Holy Land, which was to become a great and glorious kingdom. But just as the majority of Christians suffered the doctrine of the Millennium to recede into the background, when the Church became dominant, so Jews, for the most part, have dealt in modern times with the old teaching of a restoration to Zion.

France may well take credit to itself for having been the first Christian State of Europe that fully carried into effect the principle of liberty of conscience. In 1789 it proclaimed complete emancipation to all its Jewish subjects, and they have repaid the debt by a passionate devotion to all its national interests. The French Jews have won a foremost place in the Senate, at the Bar, as well as in literature, science, and art, and some of them have attained to eminence as members of the government.

Out of the nine millions of Jews spread over the surface of the globe, more than four and half millions are to be found in Russia, Russian Poland, the States of Barbary, Morocco, and Roumania, where their treatment is a scandal to the civilization of the age. They have no political rights, and they are not even considered within the protection of the law. They are subjected to an exceptional system of government, which grinds them down to heartless and galling exactions.

In all other Continental States, as well as in America and the British Colonies, Jews follow the same pursuits and exhibit the same national character, for good or evil, as their fellows of other creeds. Despite the tenacity of habit, superinduced by centuries of persecution, the effects of which are not thrown off in a few generations, the Jews are powerfully represented in art, in pure and applied science, in *Belles Lettres* and polite literature, in each of which branches every European country derives a portion of its renown from their activity and labour. A peasantry cannot be improvised out of a race which ever since the overthrow of their political nationality have rarely been permitted to handle a plough or to plant a vine. There is nothing, however, incompatible with the qualifications needful for husbandry in the character of a people who, in the palmy days of their political existence, were almost



exclusively devoted to agriculture. In Jafa, Hebron, and other parts of Palestine they are at the present time establishing agricultural colonies, and the hills are beginning to assume something like the appearance of the gardens of olden times, so vividly described in the Songs of Zion. This beneficial movement amongst the Palestinian Hebrews is to be ascribed chiefly to the French Jews, the originators of the "Alliance Israélite," one of the most useful institutions amongst our community in modern times. The Jews of England have heartily participated in the movement, and its spirit has radiated through the primary and industrial schools of Jerusalem, Safet, and other places, into the whole of the social relations of the Palestine Hebrews. Ignorance and pauperism are fast disappearing from amongst them, and they are acquiring modern culture and realizing the first pulsations of active and self-supporting industry.

The modern history of British Jews dates from the year 1655. Banished from the soil of England by the heartless edict of 1279, the Jews had often turned a longing eye to this country, where the laws offered a protection for the oppressed not to be found during the sixteenth century in any other European State. Still, the new spirit breathed into England by the Reformation gave little hope of the repeal of the cruel edict against the disciples of Moses. From Oliver Cromwell, whose memory should be dear to all lovers of religious freedom, came the first faint expression of sympathy for the persecuted race. In 1655 he suffered it to be made known, to a few eminent merchants of Amsterdam, that he entertained no personal objection to the re-admission of the Jews into England, and that, in as far as related to himself, they would find in him an advocate rather than an opponent. This was enough to induce some of the Jews of the Netherlands to depute the famous Rabbi Manasseh ben Israel to proceed to London and to plead before the Privy Council for the revocation of Edward I.'s decree of banishment. Cromwell advocated it in a speech of remarkable power, but he failed to overcome the rancorous prejudices of his Council, and Manasseh returned home after what appeared to have been a fruitless expedition. Relying, however, on the personal good will of Cromwell, a few families from Amsterdam and The Hague made their way to London, and were soon joined by other emigrants, until they found themselves in 1656 in numbers sufficient to establish a synagogue. They encountered a fierce opposition, especially from the merchants of the City, and, as they had no legal sanction for their settlement in England, many petitions were presented to Parliament for their expulsion. The death of Oliver Cromwell in 1658 deprived them of a warm friend and sympathizer, but the conflict which arose

under Richard Cromwell amongst the democratic leaders so completely engrossed the public mind that little heed was paid to the return of the Jews. In 1664 the old spirit of fanaticism revived with accelerated force, and the Jews were so maltreated by the mob that they had to petition the Government for the protection of their persons and their property. Their religious creed was regarded as a misdemeanour by the bulk of the population, and the Protestant clergy consigned them to a moral and social quarantine. They were made to feel that if England gave them for the time being an abiding place, it was far from affording them a home. It was no uncommon thing to arrest their merchants in the Royal Exchange, under the Statute of the 23rd Elizabeth, as "Relapsed Popish Recusants."

In 1723 they were for the first time formally recognized by Parliament by an Act enabling them to take the oath of abjuration without the words, "On the true faith of a Christian," a concession that seemed to indicate a softening of prejudice. In 1755 the Government carried through Parliament a Bill for the naturalization of British-born Jews, in recognition of their patriotic efforts to save the country from bankruptcy during the perilous rebellion in 1745. But scarcely had the session closed when a wild agitation arose throughout the land for the repeal of the Act, and the Government, yielding to the popular clamor, carried its repeal in the following session of Parliament. The late Sir Robert Peel, in a speech in the repeal of the Acts which excluded the Jews from sitting as members of the Legislature, described the repeal of the Bill of 1755, as the most shameful deed ever perpetrated by Parliament. This strong manifestation indicated the rough husk of bigotry that still adhered to the bulk of the English people, and that the bent of its spirit was evidently towards intolerance. The Jews were so completely cowed by the event of 1756, that for more than three generations they confined themselves to their "Goshen" in the east of London, without mixing with any but the members of their own faith except for the purpose of business transactions. They were timid about committing themselves again to a movement for the amelioration of their condition, which might produce sectarian strife and arouse a spirit of rancour like that of which they had heard their fathers tell and lament.

The first quarter of the present century had nearly run its course when the London merchants gave evidence of the dawn of a more humane feeling towards Jews, by enabling them to become Freemen of the City. Still they laboured under many exceptional disabilities, and to remove these, Mr., afterwards Sir, Isaac Lyon Goldsmid, devoted all the energies of his capacious

mind, and the most invincible perseverance. But it was hopeless to attempt to abrogate the penal laws against the Jews so long as the more powerful bodies of Dissenters and Roman Catholics were labouring under similar exclusions. Still the grievance of which the Jews had so long complained of, being deprived of the benefit of a University education, was felt to be so intolerable as to demand an immediate remedy. The poet, Thomas Campbell, had suggested the idea of starting a university apart from theology and every kind of religious test, and Mr. Goldsmid seized with delight the suggestion. He devoted to the project a considerable sum, and engaged in the undertaking the powerful support of Brougham, Hume, Warburton, and other advanced Liberals. Hence the establishment of University College, which has exercised an appreciable influence on the progress of education; and to it may be traced the larger views and the wider sympathies that have since found their way into the chartered Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Before the foundation of University College no career was open to the aspiring Israelite but that of commerce; and the mental superiority which that race has displayed ever since a field has been afforded it excites a feeling of regret that many a powerful intellect amongst the Jews should have been suffered to stagnate during ages of exclusiveness, for lack of opportunity for cultivation.

Jewish hope revived in 1828, when Lord John Russell carried through the House of Commons the repeal of the Test and Corporations Acts, but the Episcopal Bench in the House of Lords would pass the Bill only on the condition of the insertion of the words, "On the true faith of a Christian," as a part of the declaration on acceptance of office. The passing of the Roman Catholic Relief Bill in 1829, renewed the hope of the Jews that their complete emancipation was at hand. But preliminary measures had to precede its realization.

In 1847 the election of David Salomons as Alderman of the City led to the passing of an Act enabling him and others of his faith elected to municipal office to omit from the required declaration words which they could not conscientiously subscribe. Soon followed the election of Baron Lionel de Rothschild as member for the City of London, and then the question of the complete emancipation of the Jews was brought within the range of practical politics. For eleven long years a contest was maintained on this question between the two Houses of Parliament; but in 1858 it was settled by a proposal of compromise made by the Earl of Lucan, and the last of the civil disabilities which had so long stained the statute book was removed.

During the last quarter of a century the Anglo-Jewish

community has advanced with rapid strides. Many things have combined for their improvement, but no factor has been so potent as that of education. Whilst University College has conferred priceless benefits on the upper classes, and sent forth men who have shed lustre on their *Ama Mater*, the renowned school in Bell Lane, Spitalfields, continues to instruct three thousand poor children at an annual cost of £12,000. Other schools of less magnitude exist in different parts of the Metropolis. The improvement of the lower classes wrought by these institutions is very remarkable. The educational reports, furnished from time to time by the Government inspectors show that of all religious denominations in England the Jews have proportionally the smallest number who are destitute of the common franchise of reading and writing. The troops of Hebrew boys which, a quarter of a century ago, infested the public thoroughfares as vendors of articles of small value, and the young men that assailed the public ear with the incessant cry of "Old Clo," have quite disappeared from the scene; and they are succeeded by a generation that takes to more elevating and productive callings at home, or in the colonies, where they have become prosperous. Mendicity still prevails to a considerable extent in the community, owing to foreign emigrants expatriated from Russia and Germany, and they resort for the most part to London as a fancied El Dorado. Much interesting information bearing on this hard social problem is supplied in the periodical reports of the Jewish Board of Guardians.

Throughout Great Britain and Ireland there are more than ninety thousand Jews, by far the larger portion of whom are located in London and its suburbs, whilst the city of New York alone is said to contain one hundred thousand of the Hebrew community. They are remarkably free from predatory acts and deeds of violence, and they are strictly law-abiding. Intemperance is a failing rarely found amongst them, but the lower classes are much given to gambling. Until recently the prevailing feature amongst the poorest Jewesses was chastity, but it is less strictly maintained at present, the mania for fine attire is the cause of the fall of not a few.

In matters of religious faith and practice the British Jews cling to the code of Moses, unshaken amidst the changes and the turmoil of ages, and they recognize in the Synagogue a living organism. Some of their ritual observances have naturally yielded to modifications, motivated by time, locality, and circumstance. They draw a line of distinction between the matter and the manner, the essence and the accident, the spirit and the form, or, in other words, between outward and inward religion. They regard Judaism from its practical, and not from its speculative,

standpoint. It is to them what the Germans call a *Religion der That*, and it resolves itself into what Scripture charges them to do and to refrain from doing. Indeed, Judaism is remarkably free from dogmatism, and is essentially a religion of action. It emphatically repudiates the doctrine of exclusive salvation, a doctrine that has produced so much persecution and bloodshed in the world. It likewise discountenances every attempt to suppress the critical spirit and to paralyze the intellect, to stigmatize honest doubt or error as guilt, and to elevate dogma above the moral element of religion. Influenced by the endless variety of human opinions, and maintained by all with equal honesty, confidence, and hope, Judaism holds and teaches that no one can be distant from God "whose life is in the right." This is not a sudden outcome of Jewish sentiment prompted by modern liberalism, but is as old as the Bible itself. The same Voice that promulgated the Decalogue at Sinai proclaimed that, "on every place where the Divine name should be recorded, a blessing from above would descend." Again, at the inauguration of the Temple at Jerusalem, Solomon placed the non-Israelite on precisely the same level as the Hebrew with respect to the acceptance of prayer. Even in times of sore persecution from the Crescent and the Cross, when the bitterness of the hour might have called forth a hostile or anti-social utterance, the Rabbins openly taught that "salvation is the heritage of the virtues of all peoples." Religious teachers there have been, and are still, who profess their incapability to conceive how any but one measure of belief and one stereotyped form of worship can be acceptable to the Almighty. But here the Jew finds no perplexity, since he recognizes in the very variety of prevailing opinions and forms a telling evidence of the righteousness of God, who judges between the errors of the head, if errors they be, and the errors of the heart.

The Jew, therefore, does not classify men by the principle of the theology. He regards the severity practised towards the Canaanites of old not as a consequence of erroneous religious belief, but as a retribution for their revolting and unnatural crimes, which were inseparable from their religious practice. The Egyptians and the Edomites were also idolaters; but as they did not associate their worship with the abominations of Canaan, the Jews were charged to regard them as brothers, and to promote their welfare. Though Judaism is a missionary religion yet, paradoxical as it may seem, it is very adverse to proselytism. Conversion was practised by them so long as the Bible existed in the Hebrew version only, and was inaccessible to the outer world; but in our times, when the Scriptures are rendered into every language and dialect of the globe, and each individual can read and interpret them for

himself, Jews do not hold it incumbent to organize a propaganda, nor to intrude their views on the consciences of others. The mission of the Jews, as imposed by their legislator, lay through their personal conduct and example.

It is an error to suppose that Jews regard Christianity with anything like a hostile sentiment. They naturally distinguish between Christianity in its infancy, which rested altogether on a *moral* basis, and the Christianity of a later period, when its moral conceptions became materialized by the influence of metaphysical dogma. Still, inasmuch as in its present qualified phase it continues to embody and teach the fundamental ethics of the code of Sinai, Jews esteem it as one of the means for disseminating in the world the essential principles of morality and civilization. On this account the Jew has no conscientious scruple in granting plots of land on his estate, or in contributing in other ways for the building of churches and chapels of all denominations. A sense of social duty, no less than the feeling that property has its obligations as well as its rights, prompts him to make some provision for the spiritual needs of his tenantry.

I venture, in conclusion, to offer a bald remark or two on a subject with respect to which the Synagogue differs very widely in its teaching from that of the Church, and that is on the doctrine of Messianism, or what is called in Evangelical phrase "the coming of the kingdom of heaven." In the cheering and elevating homilies of the prophets of Judah a touching picture is drawn of an ideal human happiness and of a state of social perfection made manifest by a higher life in every child of God. It exhibits humanity as no longer restricted by the limitations of country, race, or tribe, and all contention, social no less than sectarian, giving place to gentleness and concord. The differences of religious belief, and the varying forms of its outward expression, are to be consigned to the past, and there is to be one common house of prayer, where all are to meet and join in praise to the Universal Father. Many are the vicissitudes through which the Jewish race has passed, but never has this grand, prophetic ideal been extinguished from their hopes nor ceased to be rehearsed in the liturgy of the Synagogue. The more troublous the age, the more hostile the fanaticism waxed, the closer the Jews clung to the hope that persecution would gradually wear itself out, although its spirit might flicker at intervals, and that the crowning scene of the Messianic drama would realize the Psalmist's prediction of "Mercy and truth meeting together, and righteousness and peace being locked in fond embrace."

The idea finds its most intense expression in the Apocalyptic books of Daniel, Enoch, Sirack, and the Sybelline leaves, all of

which date upwards from about the year 170 before the Christian era. Now the Church, as it seems to us Jews, holds this Messianic era to have come, and to have found its realization, in part at least, in the advent of the renowned Teacher whom it recognizes as the predicted Messiah of the Hebrew Scriptures. From such a conclusion Jewish sentiment totally dissents. It seems to the disciples of the Synagogue something like a moral paradox to assimilate the condition which the world has continued to exhibit with the glorious epoch prophesied by the seers of Judah, and it must be borne in mind that the Hebrew Bible speaks of one Messianic advent only, and not of two advents. It should not, therefore, excite surprise that Jews cannot persuade themselves that the promised total cessation of strife and war, the perfection of human happiness, and the union of all hearts and minds has already been realized, and that the glorious Messianic epoch has found its ideal in the form of "a man of sorrows."

Jews, therefore, look to the future for the realization of the Messianic promises, and, committing their accomplishment to the time-working providence of the Eternal One, they feel it a duty to respect the different systems of denominations of religion, whilst they remain true to their own, giving practical effect to the words of the seer Micah: "Let all others adhere to their creed and worship, and let us walk in the name of our God for ever and ever."

We feel that He whose mandate all nature obeys, He whose providence over the destinies of Israel is as manifest to-day as it has been in every phase of our exceptional history, may well enlist our confidence to accomplish, through the Abrahamic race, the Messianic regeneration, and to make Israel the instrument for advancing spiritual truth and moral development, until they attain the climax of healing all sectarian and social differences, and in bringing all men to worship at one common altar, when all that is base shall give place to what is exalted in thought and sublime in action. The Greek poets taught that a golden age such as this had come and gone. The Jewish prophets assigned it to a distant future, and in the future alone can Jews find any appreciable meaning of "Messiah's Advent" and "the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven."

MITHRAISM.<sup>1</sup>

BY JOHN M. ROBERTSON.

IN the current edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, the completion of which was recently celebrated, you will find devoted to the subject of the ancient deity Mithra or Mithras, and his cultus, one half-page. It might seem, then, that I am asking your attention to a subject of very small importance—to a religion of very little account among the religions of antiquity. I venture to assert, however, that though I should now fail to awaken in you any interest in the matter proportionate to its moment, Mithraism is and will remain a subject with a very close and serious bearing upon the history of religious evolution, and upon the concrete religion prevailing in our own day in Christendom. A very little inquiry serves to discover that this ancient cult, of which so little is known in our own time, was during some centuries of the Roman empire the most widespread of the religious systems which that empire embraced; that is to say, that Mithraism was the most nearly universal religion of the western world in those early centuries which we commonly call Christian—the two or three centuries before the fall of imperial Rome. As to this, students seem agreed.<sup>2</sup> To the early Fathers we shall see Mithraism was a most serious thorn in the flesh; and the monumental remains of the Roman period, in almost all parts of the empire, show its extraordinary popularity. In our own country, held by the Romans for three hundred years at a time when Christianity is supposed to have penetrated the whole imperial world, there have been found no monumental signs whatever of any Roman profession of the Christian faith; while

<sup>1</sup> A Lecture delivered to the South Place Ethical Society. References and notes have been added for readers.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Tiele, "Outlines of the Hist. of the Anc. Relig.," Eng., p. 170; Gaston Boissier, "*La Religion Romaine d'Auguste aux Antonins*," i. 395, ii. 417; H. Seel, "*Die Mithragerheimnisse*," Aarau, 1823, p. 214; Sainte-Croix, "*Recherches sur les Mystères du Paganisme*," 2e. ed., ii. 123; Smith and Cheetham's "Dict. of Christ. Antiq.," Art. *Paganism*, Beugnot, "*Hist. de la Destruction du Paganisme*," 1835, i. 225; Windischmann, "*Mithra, ein Beitrag zur Mythengeschichte der Orients*," in "*Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlands*," Bd. i., S. 62.



monuments in honour of Mithra abound.<sup>1</sup> There has been found, for instance, a Mithraic cave at Housesteads, in Northumberland, containing sculptures of Mithra-worship, and an inscription: "To the god, best and greatest, invincible Mithra, lord of ages;" and another at Kichester, with an inscription: "To the god the sun, the invincible Mithra, the lord of ages." Other monuments have been found at Chester, on the line of the Roman wall, at Cambeck-fort in Cumberland, at Oxford, and at York.<sup>2</sup> And "Mithraic bas-reliefs, cut upon the smoothed faces of rocks, or upon tablets of stone, still abound throughout the former western provinces of the Roman Empire; many exist in Germany; still more in France."<sup>3</sup> According to Mr. King, again, "the famous 'Arthur's Oon' (destroyed in the last century) upon the Carron, a hemispherical vaulted building of immense blocks of stone, was unmistakably a *Specus Mithræum*, the same in design as Chosroes' magnificent fire temple at Gazaca."<sup>4</sup>

And yet, with all this testimony to the vogue of Mithraism in the early Christian centuries, there ensues for a whole era an absolute blank in the knowledge of the matter in Christendom—a thousand years in which the ancient cultus seems a forgotten name in Europe. One modern investigator, M. Lajard,<sup>5</sup> thinks that since the time of the Fathers, as the phrase goes, the first in European literature to mention Mithra was Pietro Riccio (Petrus Crinitus),<sup>6</sup> born about 1465, a disciple of Politian; and no other mention occurs till about the middle of the sixteenth century.<sup>7</sup> And such was the ignorance of most scholars, that of three now well-known Mithraic monuments discovered about that period, not one is attributed to Mithra either by the great antiquarian of the time, Rossi, or by his pupil Flaminio Vacca. You all know the sculptured group of Mithras slaying the bull, so often engraved, of which we have a good example in the British Museum. Rossi declared one of these monuments to represent Jupiter, as the bull, carrying off Europa; and Vacca tells how a lion-headed image, now known to represent Mithra, but then held to represent the devil, was (probably) burned in a limekiln. A century later, Leibnitz demonstrated that Ormazd and Ahriman were simply deified heroes; and later still the historian Mosheim, a

<sup>1</sup> See Wright's "The Celt, the Roman, and the Saxon," 3rd. ed., pp. 327, 353.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.* p. 327. Wellbeloved, "*Eburacum*," 1842, pp. 75, 84. Stukeley, "*Palaographica Britannica*," No. 3, London, 1752. See also the inscriptions to Sol and Mithra in Hübner, "*Inscr. Brit. Lat.*"

<sup>3</sup> C. W. King, "The Gnostics and their Remains," 2nd ed., p. 136: see the modern writers on Mithraism generally.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.* *ib.*

<sup>5</sup> "*Introduction à l'Étude du Culte de Mithra*," 1847, pp. 2, 3.

<sup>6</sup> "*De Honestâ Disciplina*," v. 14, cited by Lajard.

<sup>7</sup> By Smet and Pighi.

man not devoid of judgment, elaborately and fatuously proved that Mithra had simply been at one time like Nimrod, a famous hunter,<sup>1</sup> before the lord or otherwise. And even in our own day, when all the extant notices and monuments of Mithra have been carefully collected and studied, a vigilant scholar<sup>2</sup> confesses that we are profoundly ignorant as to the Mithraic religion. It is somewhat remarkable that this should be so; and though in the terms of the case we cannot look to find much direct knowledge, we may hope at least to find out *why* the once popular cultus has fallen into such obscurity. To that end we must see what really is known about it.

If we were to trace completely the history of Mithraism, however, we should have to make an examination not merely of Mithraism proper, but of at least three older systems. One principle must have been impressed on many of you by the present course of lectures—namely, that all religions run into and derive from some other religions, the creeds of all mankind being simply phases of a continuous evolution. So, when we say that Mithraism derives from Persia, we are already implying that it affiliates more distantly to India and to Assyria—to the earliest of those masses of confused fancies which represent in somewhat collected form man's endless guesses at the riddle of the universe. Here it must suffice, therefore, to give only the briefest sketch of origins.

We trace the cult specifically in the earliest Aryan documents—in the Vedas, in which the deity Mithra is one of the most prominent figures.

"In the Indo-Iranian religion," M. Darmesteter writes,<sup>3</sup> "the Asura of Heaven was often invoked in company with Mithra, the god of the heavenly light; and he let him share with himself the universal sovereignty. In the Veda they are invoked as a pair (Mitrā-Varuṇā) which enjoys the same powers and rights as Varuṇā alone, as there is nothing more in Mitrā-Varuṇā than in Varuṇā alone, Mitra being the light of Heaven, that is, the light of Varuṇā. But Ahura-Mazda [Ormazd] could no longer bear an equal, and Mithra [in the Zend-Avesta] became one of his creatures. 'This Mithra, the lord of wide pastures, I have created as worthy of sacrifice, as worthy of glorification, as I, Ahura-Mazda, am myself.'<sup>4</sup> But old formulae, no longer understood, in which Mithra and Ahura, or rather Mithra-Ahura, are invoked in an indivisible unity, dimly remind one that the Creator was formerly a brother to his creature."

"He preserved, however, a high situation, both in the concrete and in the abstract mythology. As the god of the heavenly light, the lord of vast luminous space, of the wide pastures above, he became later the god of the Sun, *Deo invicto Soli Mithræ*; (in Persian *Mīhr* is the Sun). As light and truth were one and the

<sup>1</sup> Mosheim's notes on Cudworth, "Intel. Syst.," Harrison's ed., i. 475.

<sup>2</sup> Havet, "*Le Christianisme et ses Origines*," iii. 402.

<sup>3</sup> The Zend-Avesta, i., Introd., pp. lx., lxi., "Sacred Books of the East" series, vol. iv.

<sup>4</sup> "Mīhr Yašt," 1., in vol. ii. of M. Darmesteter's translation of the Zend-Avesta (vol. 23 of "Sacred Books" series). Cf. the Khōrshēd Nyāyis in same vol., p. 351.

same thing, viewed with the eyes of the body and of the mind. he becomes the god of truth and faith. He punishes the Mithra-Drug, 'him who lies to Mithra' (or 'who lies to the contract,' since Mithra as a neuter noun means friendship agreement, contract'); he is a judge in hell, in company with Rashnu, 'the true one,' the god of truth, a mere offshoot of Mithra in his moral character."<sup>1</sup>

The ritual of the Avesta is perfectly clear on the subject. "We sacrifice unto Mithra and Ahura, the two great, imperishable, holy gods; and unto the stars, and the moon, and the sun, with the trees that yield up baresma" [burned on the altar]. "We sacrifice unto Mithra, the lord of all countries, whom Ahura-Mazda made the most glorious of all the gods in the world unseen." "So may Mithra and Ahura, the two great gods, come to us for help. We sacrifice unto the bright, undying, shining, swift-horsed sun."<sup>2</sup> And connected with the teaching of Zoroaster we find Mithra extolled by Ahura-Mazda as a beneficent and comforting spirit. "Happy that man, I think,"—said Ahura-Mazda,—"O holy Zarathustra! for whom a holy priest, . . . who is the word incarnate, offers up a sacrifice unto Mithra. . . . Straight to that man, I think, will Mithra come, to visit his dwelling. Then Mithra's boons will come to him, as he follows God's teaching, and thinks according to God's teaching."<sup>3</sup> This was doubtless a relatively late and high form of the cultus in Persia, since in the Avesta we find Mithra repeatedly invoked as a warlike and formidable deity, a god of battles, swift to assail and slay the enemies of truth and justice—which would normally mean, the enemies of his worshippers.

Thus, then, we have the cultus of Mithra as the sun-god, the deity of light and truth, created by, and yet co-equal with, the Supreme Deity, and fighting on the side of the good against the evil power Angra-Mainyu (Ahriman),—this at a period long before the Christian era. So much is certain, whatever we may decide as to the actual period of the writing of the Avesta, as it has come down to us. Of the literature of Mazdeism, of course, a great deal has perished; this appearing, says M. Darmesteter, not only from internal evidence, but from history.

"The Arab conquest proved fatal to the religious literature of the Sassanian ages, a great part of which was either destroyed by the fanaticism of the conquerors and the new converts, or lost during the long exodus of the Parsis . . . The cause that preserved the Avesta is obvious; taken as a whole, it does not profess to be a religious encyclopædia, but only a liturgical collection; and it bears more likeness to a prayer book than to the Bible."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On the bearing of early Mithraism on conduct see in particular the "Mithra Yast," xxix., pronounced by M. Darmesteter "one of the most important in the Avesta, as a short account of the social constitution and morals of Zoroastrian Iran" (ii. 149, n.).

<sup>2</sup> Darmesteter's "Zend-Avesta," ii., 158, 351.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* ii. 155.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* *Intro.*, pp. xxxi., xxxii.

Thus we can only infer the nature of the system. But what we do know is, that as time went on, the cultus of Mithra became more and more considerable. It is hardly accurate to say, as does Canon Rawlinson, that "Mithra was originally not held in very high esteem;" but it is the historic fact that—

"he ultimately came to occupy a place only a little inferior to that assigned, from the first, to the Ahura-Mazda. Darius, the son of Hystaspes, placed the emblems of Ahura-Mazda and of Mithra in equally conspicuous positions on the sculptured tablet above his tomb [B.C. 485]; and his example was followed by all the later monarchs of his race whose sepulchres are still in existence. Artaxerxes Mnemon [d. B.C. 358] placed an image of Mithra in the temple attached to the royal palace of Suza. He also in his inscriptions unites Mithra with Ahura-Mazda, and prays for their conjoint protection. Artaxerxes Ochus [d. B.C. 337] does the same a little later; and the practice is also observed in portions of the Zendavesta composed about this period."<sup>1</sup>

Artaxerxes Mnemon, too, swore by "the light of Mithras," as our William the Conqueror swore by "the splendour of God."<sup>2</sup>

But of the importance and range of the Mithraic worship at a distant period, we have sufficient evidence in the mere vogue of the name Mithridates, "given by Mithra," which we find in use at least six hundred years before the Christian era.

This deity, then, is from remote antiquity, one of high moral attributes, at times worshipped, no doubt, licentiously,<sup>3</sup> as deities have been in all ages, but expressly associated with moral qualities. Theologically, he exists both in abstract and in symbol: originally he is simply the sun; later, according to the universal law of religious evolution, he becomes a spirit apart from the sun, but symbolised by it, the sun being worshipped in his name, he being the god who sustains it; nay, an actual subordinate sun-god takes his place, even in the Rig Veda.<sup>4</sup> But since in Persian his name (Mihr) actually means the sun,<sup>5</sup> he can never be dissociated from it; and as the same word also means "the friend," the light being the friend of man,<sup>6</sup> and seems to connote love or amity, a moral distinction inevitably attaches to him in a stage

<sup>1</sup> "The Religions of the Ancient World," p. 105, citing the author's "Ancient Monarchies," iv. 334; Flandin, "*Voyage en Perse*," pls. 164bis., 166, 173-6; Loftus, "*Chaldaea and Susiana*," p. 572; and Sir H. Rawlinson's "Cuneiform Inscriptions," i. 342. See also Windischmann, "*Mithra, ein Beitrag zur Mythengeschichte des Orients*," in "*Abländlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlands*," Bd. i., S. 55.

<sup>2</sup> King, "The Gnostics and their Remains," p. 116.

<sup>3</sup> Athenæus (x. 45), citing Ctesias and Duris, tells that among the Persians the king was permitted to get drunk and dance on one day in the year only, the festival of Mithras (probably Christmas-day); no one else being allowed to get drunk or dance on that day.

<sup>4</sup> Rawlinson, "Relig. of Anc. World," p. 130.

<sup>5</sup> Darmesteter, Introd. to "Zend-Avesta," p. liv.; Sainte-Croix, "*Recherches*," ii. 122, n.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

of human thought in which names have an incalculable significance. And at length, the dualist theory holding its ground as a theological system, as it always will while men personify the energies of the universe, Mithra comes to occupy a singular position as between the two great powers of good and evil, Ormazd and Ahriman (the Ahura-Mazda, and Angra-Mainyu of Mazdeism), being actually named the MEDIATOR,<sup>1</sup> and figuring to the devout eye as a humane and beneficent God, nearer to man than the Great Spirit of Good, a Saviour, a Redeemer, eternally young, son of the Most High, and preserver of mankind from the Evil One. In brief, he is a pagan Christ.

Much has been written as to whether Mithra was worshipped as the sun, or as the creator and sustainer of the sun. There can be little doubt that the two ideas existed, and were often blended. We may depend upon it, that for the weak and ignorant minds, which could only conceive a personal god under the form of a man or animal, or both combined, the perpetual pageant of the sun was a help and not a hindrance to elevation of thought; and that even to the thinkers, who sought to distinguish between matter and essence, and reckoned the sun only a part of the material universe, the great orb would yet be the very symbol of life and splendour and immortality; that it should be the chosen seat of the deity who ruled mankind; and that it should be the viewless spirit of the sun who, in their thought, proclaimed to man the oracle of the Soul of the Universe:—"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."

But in the great polytheistic era, the habit of personifying all the forces of nature led first to a universal admission of the actual existence of the deities of foreign peoples—an admission which we find repeatedly made in the sacred books of the Jews—and later on, to the idea that all the deities of the nations are but names of phases of one central and omnipotent power. Even among the philosophers and theologians, of course, this conception never really destroyed the habit of thinking of the alleged phases or manifestations of the deity as being really minor deities; and much more a matter of course was it that among the multitude the deity or deities should always be conceived in a quite concrete form. But the synthesizing tendency early resulted in this, that different cults were combined; different god-names identified as pointing to the same god; and different gods combined into unities of two, three, four, or more members. Egypt is the great theological factory for such combinations; but the law necessarily operated everywhere. The conception of a Divine Trinity is of

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch, "On Isis and Osiris," 46.

unknown antiquity; it flourishes in Hindostan, in the Platonic philosophy, in Egypt, long before Christianity. But the combining process, among other variations, had to take account of the worship of goddesses as well as of gods; and in regions where goddess-worship was deeply rooted, it was inevitable that there should occur combinations of sex. This actually took place in the worship of Mithra. From Herodotus,<sup>1</sup> writing in the fifth century B.C., we learn that in some way the god Mithra was identified with a goddess. The whole passage, though familiar to students, is worth quoting:—

“The Persians, according to my own knowledge, observe the following customs. It is not their practice to erect statues, or temples, or altars, but they charge those with folly who do so; because, as I conjecture, they do not think the gods have human forms, as the Greeks do. They are accustomed to ascend the highest parts of the mountains, and offer sacrifice to Jupiter, and they call the whole circle of the heavens by the name of Jupiter. They sacrifice to the sun and moon, to the earth, fire, water, and the winds. To these alone they have sacrificed from the earliest times: but they have since learnt from the Arabians and Assyrians to sacrifice to Venus Urania, whom the Assyrians call Venus Mylitta, the Arabians Alitta, and the Persians Mitra.”

This is one of the many seemingly improbable statements in Herodotus which late research has confirmed. He is accused,<sup>2</sup> indeed, of blundering in combining Mithra with Mylitta, it being shown from monuments that the goddess identified with Mithra was Anaitis or Tanat.<sup>3</sup> I do not see how we can be so sure that Anaitis and Mylitta were never regarded as the same goddess; but in any case the point as to combination is certain. It is made good, not only by the statement of the Christian controversialist Julius Firmicus, in the fourth century, and later writers, that the Persians make Mithras both two-sexed and threefold or three-formed,<sup>4</sup> but by innumerable Mithraic monuments on which appear the symbols of two deities, male and female, the sun and the moon, or, it may be male and female principles of the sun. And this epicene or double-sexed character is singularly preserved to us in that Mithraic monument of the Græco-Roman period which we possess in our own British Museum, in which the divine slayer of the bull presents a face of perfect and sexless beauty, feminine in its delicate loveliness of feature, masculine in its association with the male form.

But to refer to these Mithraic monuments, of which there

<sup>1</sup> i. 131.

<sup>2</sup> Rawlinson's "Herodotus," i. 257. Cp. Lenormant, "Manual of Anc. Hist." Eng. tr., ii. 46.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 416. On the names of this goddess. see G. Diercks, "*Entwicklungsgeschichte des Geistes der Menschheit*," Berlin, 1881, i. 242.

<sup>4</sup> "*De Errone Profanarum Religionum*," v. Compare Dionysius the pseudo-Areopagite, Epist. vii. ad Polycarp., cited in Selden, "*De Diis Syris*," Proleg. c. 3; and in Cudworth, "Intel. Syst.," Harrison's ed., i. 482.

are so many examples, is to point out that the old Persian aversion to images of deity had disappeared with the extension of the Mithraic cultus. There is, of course, no doubt as to the original forbiddal of images, despite the common delusion that the Jews were the first to lay down such a veto. The Jews, of course, got the idea from their conquerors, who taught and civilized them. But it was inevitable that in the artistic countries,<sup>1</sup> the adoption of Mithraism should involve the representing Mithra by images, like other deities. Nor was this all. One reason for regarding the Zend-Avesta as essentially ancient is the comparative simplicity of the Mithra cultus it sets forth. Just as happened with Christianity later, the spreading faith assimilated all sorts of ancient symbolisms, and new complications of ritual; and Mithra later figures for us in the strange symbolic figures of the lion-headed serpentine god, but above all in that of the slayer of the bull. Whence came that conception? There are many explanations. It has been variously decided that the bull slain by Mithra is the symbol of the earth, the symbol of the moon, the bull of the zodiac, and the cosmogonic bull of the Magian system.<sup>2</sup> Now, anyone who has studied such a work of ancient theosophy as Plutarch's treatise on Isis and Osiris—a singularly interesting document, by the way—will be perfectly prepared to believe that for the ancients the bull of Mithra could represent *all four of these things*. In that famous treatise, Isis and Orisis and Typhon successively represent a number of different principles in nature—sun, moon, moisture, the Nile, generative warmth, injurious heat, wind, and so on—shifting and exchanging their places, till it becomes plain that the old theosophy was but a ceaseless flux of more or less congruous fancies. We may depend upon it that Mithraism was as hospitable to mystic meanings as Osirianism. It is perfectly intelligible and probable that Mithra slaying the bull should have meant the rays of the sun penetrating the earth, and so creating life for mundane creatures, as the dog<sup>3</sup> feeds on the blood of the slain bull. But those who adopt this as the whole explanation,<sup>4</sup> overlook a principle bound up with the very origin of Mithraism—the significance of the bull as one of those signs-of-the-zodiac

<sup>1</sup> I do not quite follow Canon Rawlinson's meaning in the statement ("Seventh Oriental Monarchy," p. 632), that "the *Persian* system was further tainted with idolatry in respect of the worship of Mithra." For that matter, however, the "idolatry" of antiquity is on all fours with the reverence of images under Christianity.

<sup>2</sup> Hammer-Purgstall, "*Mithriaca*," Caen and Paris, 1833, p. 31.

<sup>3</sup> For another signification of the dog here, see Mr. King's "Gnostics and their Remains," 2nd ed., p. 137. Compare the Osirian theory in Plutarch, "Isis and Osiris," 44.

<sup>4</sup> King, pp. 135, 136.

through which the sun passed in his annual course. It is certain that the zodiac was the source of very much of the symbolism and mysticism of those ancient cults which their priesthoods associated with the sun, not to speak of those whose priesthoods professedly repudiated sun worship. And one of the most important facts established by the collection and comparison of ancient monuments<sup>1</sup> is that the Mithraic cultus connects symbolically with an Assyrian cultus far older. You have all seen copies of that common Assyrian monument, in which a divine or kingly personage slays a lion, thrusting a sword through him. There can, I think, be no reasonable doubt that these successive religious representations of the slaying of the lion and the slaying of the bull, rest on a zodiacal system of sacred symbolism, in which the slaying of a given animal means either the passing of the sun into a particular sign of the zodiac at a particular season of the year, or the slaying of the animal represented as a special sacrifice. The zodiac, which is of immense antiquity, has come to be conventionalized—that is to say, it is fixed, so that the signs have long ceased to coincide with the actual constellations whose names they bear. But originally the students of the stars must needs have had regard to the actual constellations. And this carries us very far back indeed. If it be right to decide that the slaying of the bull originally pointed to the sun's entering the sign of the Bull at the vernal equinox (and this is strongly suggested by the hostile function assigned in the monuments to the scorpion, which is the opposing sign, and would represent the autumnal equinox), then this symbol dates back, probably, more than 3,000 years before the Christian era; while the symbol of the slaying of the lion would derive from a period indefinitely earlier still. In point of fact, astronomy tells us that, by the precession of the equinoxes, the constellation of the Bull had ceased to be the sun's place at the vernal equinox for about 2,400 years before the reign of Augustus; the constellation of the Ram taking its place. But, just as the symbol of the slaying of the lion had, on this theory, held its ground in religion after the bull played a similar part, so did the sign of the Bull play its part in symbol and ceremony long after the sun had begun to enter the constellation Aries at the sacred season. But what gives the zodiacal theory its crowning vindication is the remarkable fact that while the bull holds its place on the monuments at the Christian era—that being an age of immense diffusion of cults and mysteries among the general population of the civilized world—we find at this very period, in connection with the worship of Mithra, as with

<sup>1</sup> See the series in Lajard's "Atlas."



that of Dionysos<sup>1</sup> or Bacchus, an actual ceremony of slaying a ram in honour of the sun-god. In Persia, the sign Aries, the ram, was known as the lamb; and in the Mithraic mysteries at the Christian era, it was a lamb that was slain. That fact, as we shall see, has further bearings; but thus far it surely counts for much as a proof of the zodiacal element in the symbolism of the ancient sophisticated sun worships. And though the notion of a fish god is deeply rooted in several of the older Eastern religions, I know of no more plausible explanation than the zodiacal one of the early Christian habit of calling Jesus Christ the fish. The sign of the Fishes comes next the Ram in the zodiac; and that constellation was actually taking the place of the Ram, at the spring equinox, about the time this symbol came into use. We know with certainty, too, from Origen, that the Mithraic mysteries included an elaborate representation of the movements of the stars and planets, and the movements of the disembodied human soul among these.<sup>2</sup>

Every widespread religion, however, is necessarily a complex of many ideas, and in the cult of Mithra this is abundantly seen. The image of the slaying of the bull, whatever its original bearing, came to be associated specially with the idea of sacrifice and purification; and the great vogue of the Phrygian institutions of the Taurobolia and Criobolia,<sup>3</sup> or purification by the blood of bulls and rams, must have reacted on Mithraism. In connection with these we have the literal and original meaning of the phrase "washed in the blood of the lamb;" the doctrine being that resurrection and eternal life were secured by drenching or sprinkling with the actual blood of a sacrificial bull or ram (often doubtless a lamb, that being a common sacrifice from time immemorial). Thus we have such mortuary inscriptions as "*Taurobolio criobolioque in æternum renatus.*"<sup>4</sup> But whereas there was a constant tendency in the mystical systems to substitute symbolism for concrete usages, the Mithraists may be surmised to have ultimately performed their sacrificial rites in a less crude form than that described by Prudentius.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The ram "supplied the favourite Dionysiak sacrifice." R. Brown, "The Great Dionysiak Myth," ii. 65. In one version of the Dionysian myth, Zeus changes Dionysos into a ram to save him from Hera. Smith's Dict., art. *Dionysus*, citing Hyginus and Theon.

<sup>2</sup> "Against Celsus," vi. 22.

<sup>3</sup> Referred to by Firmicus, xxviii.

<sup>4</sup> Given in note on Firmicus in ed. Hackiana, 1672, p. 56. See it also in Orelli, No. 2352. See further No. 1899, 1900, 2130, 2199, 2322, 2326, 2328, 2330, 2331, 2351, 2353, 2361. Compare Boeckh, 6012, *b*, *c*. Here the taurobolium and criobolium are directly connected with Mithraism. On the "blood shed for all" see Preller, "*Römische Mythologie*," 1865, p. 761, *n*.

<sup>5</sup> X. 1009, 1050. Concerning the taurobolium at Athens, see Dittenberger, "*Inscr. Atticæ et. Romanæ*," 172, 173. Cp. King, "Gnostics," p. 154.

Resembling other cults at some points, the Mithraic was markedly peculiar in others. The great specialty of this worship, as we learn from several writers, is that it was carried on in caves—so far at least as its special mysteries were concerned—the cave being considered so all-important that where natural caves did not exist, the devotees made artificial ones.<sup>1</sup> Porphyry puts it on record<sup>2</sup> that the “Persians, mystically signifying the descent of the soul into the sublunary regions, and its regression thence, initiate the mystic in a place which they call a cavern. For, as Eubulus says, Zoroaster was the first who consecrated in the neighbouring mountains of Persia, an orbicular cave, in which there were flowers and fountains, in honour of Mithra, the maker and father of all things—a cave, according to Zoroaster, bearing a resemblance to the world, *which was fabricated by Mithra*. But the things contained in the cavern . . . were symbols of the mundane elements and climates.”

This explanation of the cave was not improbably suggested by a well-known passage in Plato; and it is obvious that the custom must have had some simpler origin. It is easy to understand how to half-civilized man caves would have a hundred mysterious significances, as places for dwelling or meeting made by the Deity himself; and fire- or sun-worshippers would have the special motives supplied by finding in caves the remains of the fires made by the earlier men; and by the not unnatural theory that the sun himself went into some cave when he went below the horizon at night. Indeed Porphyry admits that caves in the most remote periods of antiquity were consecrated to the gods, before temples were consecrated to them. Hence the Curetes in Crete dedicated a cavern to Jupiter; in Arcadia, a cave was sacred to the moon, and to Lycean Pan; and in Naxos, to Bacchus. “But,” he adds, “wherever Mithra was known, they propitiated the god in a cavern.”<sup>3</sup>

It appears that the greatest sanctity attached to caves in the living rock; and there are many remains of Mithraic altars cut in rocks;<sup>4</sup> nay more, the rock came to be specially associated with Mithra, who was named “rock-born;” and the phrase, “Θεὸς ἐκ πέτρας, God out of the rock,” or “Mithras out of the rock,” became one of the commonest formulas of the cultus.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Caves were, therefore, made in honour of Mithra, as temples in honour of other gods. See Orelli, 2340, 2341.

<sup>2</sup> “On the Cave of the Nymphs,” ii. Cf. Firmicus, v.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* c. 8.

<sup>4</sup> See the engravings in Jacob Bryant's “Analysis of Ancient Mythology,” ed. 1774, 4to, vol. i., pp. 232, 234, 294.

<sup>5</sup> Firmicus, “*De Erroribus*,” xxi.; Justin Martyr, “Dialogue with Trypho,” c. 70; Jerome, “*Adversus Iovinianum*,” i. 7 (Migne, xxiii., col. 219); Windischmann pp. 61, 62, citing Commodianus and Johannes Lydus.

In these rock-caves, then, or in artificial caves, the priests of Mithras celebrated the habitual rites and the special mysteries of their religion. How far they practised daily or weekly devotions is one of the matters as to which we have no positive information; but there are many reasons for believing that the worship was habitual.<sup>1</sup> The rising sun would be daily hailed with joy, as among the Jewish Essenes, and sun-worshippers everywhere; and during the night, when the sun was hidden, special prayers would be offered up. The first day of the week, Sunday, was of course from time immemorial consecrated to Mithra by Mithraists; and as the sun-god was pre-eminently "the Lord," Sunday was "the Lord's day" long before the Christian era. On that day there must have been special Mithraic worship. But we have some exact information as to the two chief Mithraic ceremonies or festivals, those of Christmas and Easter, the winter solstice and the vernal equinox, the birthday of the sun-god, and the period of his sacrifice and his triumph. That Christmas is a solar festival of unknown antiquity, which the early Christians appropriated to Christ in total ignorance of the real time of his birth, is no longer denied by competent Christian scholars—when they happen to allude to the subject. That Easter is also a solar<sup>2</sup> festival is perhaps not so freely recognized. But we know not only that Mithras and Osiris (and Horus), like so many other solar deities, were especially adored at the vernal equinox,<sup>3</sup> but that in these worships there were special formulas representing, apparently at this date,<sup>4</sup> the symbolical death of the deity, the search for his body, and the finding of it. The Christian Firmicus wrathfully tells how the priests of Osiris, who have a representation of the god in the most secret part of their temples, mourn for a certain number of days (presumptively forty,<sup>5</sup>=Lent), while professedly searching for the scattered members of his mangled body, till at length they feign to have found it, when they finish their mourning and rejoice, saying, "We have found him: rejoice we."<sup>6</sup> And we learn from Tertullian that Osiris in the mysteries was buried and came to life again.<sup>7</sup> But as to Mithraism the details are still more precise.

<sup>1</sup> Under the Mazdean system, prayer was offered to Mithra thrice daily; at dawn, at noon, and at sunset (Rawlinson, "Seventh Oriental Monarchy," p. 628, citing Spiegel, "*Tradit. Schrift. d. Pars.*" p. 135.)

<sup>2</sup> Or rather a luni-solar. It is singular that this movable feast should be celebrated as an anniversary of an event with apparently no orthodox misgivings.

<sup>3</sup> Macrobius, "*Saturnalia*," i. 18. Cp. Preller, "*Römische Mythologie*," 1866, p. 760.

<sup>4</sup> But see Plutarch, "On Isis and Osiris," 39, which creates a difficulty.

<sup>5</sup> Compare the forty nights mourning of the mysteries of Proserpine, "*De Errore*," c. xxviii.

<sup>6</sup> "*De Errore*," ii.

<sup>7</sup> "Against Marcion," i. 13.

The worshippers, Firmicus tells us,<sup>1</sup> lay a stone image by night on a bier and liturgically mourn for it, this image representing the dead god. This symbolical corpse is then placed in the tomb, and after a time is withdrawn from the tomb, whereupon the worshippers rejoice, exhorting one another to be of good hope; lights are brought in; and the priest anoints the throats of the devotees, murmuring slowly: "Be of good courage, you have been instructed in the mysteries, and you shall have salvation from your sorrows." The parallel to a central episode in the Christian legend is sufficiently striking; but there is every reason to conclude that a similar liturgy was gone through in connection with the burial and resurrection of Osiris.

This, however, was only one of the Mithraic mysteries, presumably celebrated once a year. We have further records of another enacted at the initiation of every new devotee, and probably repeated in some form frequently. Justin Martyr, in his first Apology,<sup>2</sup> after describing the institution of the Christian Lord's Supper, as narrated in the Gospels, goes on to say: "Which the wicked devils have imitated in the mysteries of Mithras, commanding the same thing to be done. For, that bread and a cup of water<sup>3</sup> are placed with certain incantations in the mystic rites of one who is being initiated, you either know or can learn." And this is borne out by Tertullian, who intimates<sup>4</sup> that "the devil undertakes to imitate in the mysteries of false gods the holy ceremonies of the Christian religion. He also plunges his worshippers in water, and makes them believe that this purifies them of their crimes. He puts a mark on the forehead of the soldiers of Mithra when they are initiated; he celebrates the oblation of bread; he offers an image of the resurrection, and presents at once the crown and the sword; he forbids to the sovereign pontiff to marry a second time; he even has his virgins and his ascetics (*continentes*)."<sup>5</sup> Again<sup>5</sup> the devil "has gone about to apply to the worship of idols all that we practise in the celebration of our mysteries."

Reference is here made to a certain ceremony of initiation. The complete initiation of a worshipper, we know, was an elaborate and even a painful process, involving many austerities,

<sup>1</sup> "*De Error.*," xxiii.

<sup>2</sup> c. 66.

<sup>3</sup> The Ebionite Christians (the earliest), it will be remembered, celebrated the communion rite with bread and water (Epiphanius, "*Hær.*," 30). And water was mixed with wine in later usage; see Bingham, "*Christian Antiquities*," ed. 1855., v. 242.

<sup>4</sup> "*Præscr.*," c. 40.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

trial by water, trial by fire, by cold, by hunger, by thirst, by scourging, by branding or bleeding,<sup>1</sup> and the mock menace of death. Of these austerities different but vague and scanty accounts are given. According to some accounts they lasted fifteen days; according to others, for forty-eight:<sup>2</sup> one old writer<sup>3</sup> alleges eighty different kinds of trials. It is more likely that they numbered twelve, seeing that on the Mithraic monuments we find representations of twelve episodes, doubtless corresponding to the twelve labours which we find in the stories of Hercules, Samson, and other sun-heroes; but, probably, also connected with the trials of the initiated.<sup>4</sup> More explicitly we know from Porphyry and from Jerome that the devotees were divided into a number of different degrees, symbolically marked by the names of birds and animals, and apparently by wearing, during some of the rites, the skins or heads of these animals. Porphyry<sup>5</sup> mentions grades of lions, lionesses, and crows, and higher grades of eagles and hawks; Jerome<sup>6</sup> speaks of crow, gryphon, soldier, lion, Persian (or Perses), sun, Bromios = roarer, (or, the bull), and father. Out of the various notices, partly by hypothesis, M. Lajard has constructed a not quite trustworthy scheme,<sup>7</sup> representing twelve Mithraic degrees: three terrestrial, the soldier, the lion,<sup>8</sup> and the bull; three aerial, the vulture, the ostrich, and the raven; three igneous, the gryphon, the horse, and the sun; and three divine, the grade of fathers, named eagle, sparrow-hawk, and father of fathers. It makes a sufficiently grotesque list, in this or any other form; but it is the old story, all religions are absurd to those who do not believe

<sup>1</sup> On this see Mr. King's "Gnostics," p. 139, citing Aug. in Johann. i. 7; Mem. Revelation, xiii. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Sainte-Croix, "*Recherches*," ii. 126, n.

<sup>3</sup> Nonnus, cited by Selden, "*De Dns Syris*," Syntag. i., c. 5, and by Windischmann, p. 69. See there also the important citation from Elias of Crete. Compare Suidas, as cited on p. 68. As to the origin of the trials, see Darmesteter on Mihr Yast, xxx. 122.

<sup>4</sup> On the twelve episodes, cp. Sainte-Croix, as cited, with King, "Gnostics," p. 128. Compare the "twelve stoles," in the mysteries of Isis, mentioned by Apuleius, ("*Metam.*," B. xi.). There is a remarkable correspondence between the twelve Mithraic trials and twelve forms of Hindoo penance (especially as regards the last), as described by Maurice, "*Indian Antiquities*," 1794, v. 981. These twelve orders of fast include trials lasting fifteen days; and the whole would cover more than eighty days.

<sup>5</sup> "On Abstinence from Animal Food," iv. 16.

<sup>6</sup> *Epistola cvii. (vii.) ad Lætam.*

<sup>7</sup> "*Recherches sur le Culte Public et Mystères de Mithra*," ed. 1867, p. 132, *et seq.* The main authority for twelve degrees is Porphyry's citation from Pallas, as to the signs of the zodiac; but M. Lajard's list is not zodiacal. The grade of the ostrich is particularly ill made-out (p. 338).

<sup>8</sup> Every animal's name used must have had a symbolical meaning. Thus we have it through Tertullian ("*Against Marcion*," i. 13), that "the lions of Mithra are mysteries of arid and scorched nature."

them;<sup>1</sup> and it is not well for those who keep a private conservatory, however small, to throw stones.

We have thus far briefly examined what may be termed the skeleton or dry bones of the Mithraic religion, so far as we can trace them, at the period when it seemed to be successfully competing with Christianity. What of the inner life, the spiritual message and attraction which there must have been to give the cult its hold over the Roman Empire? Here it is that our ignorance becomes most sharply felt. So far as Christian zeal could suppress all good report of Mithraism, this was done, when Christianity—I will not say overthrew, but absorbed—the Mithraic movement. To this day you find Christian scholars either saying or hinting that Mithraism was signalized in the Roman period by human sacrifices. I know no more disingenuous suggestion in the orthodox presentment of Paganism, profoundly prejudiced and unjust as that generally is. We do know that during the whole of the first three or four centuries it was charged against the Christians, by Jews or Pagans, that they were wont to sacrifice a child at their mysteries.<sup>2</sup> That charge was doubtless false, but it was constantly asserted. Now, the only kind of record founded on for the charge against Mithraism is one which utterly destroys that charge. Sainte-Croix, following a plainly worthless suggestion of the ecclesiastical historian Socrates,<sup>3</sup> was reckless enough to refer<sup>4</sup> to a passage in the life of Commodus by Lampridius, in the Augustan history, in support of his insinuation that Mithraism involved human sacrifice. But this passage<sup>5</sup> explicitly says that Commodus “polluted the rites of Mithras by a real homicide, where it is usual for something to be said, or feigned to be done for the purpose of causing terror” (*quum illic aliquid ad speciem timoris vel dici vel fingi solent*). The same scholar makes another reference which equally serves to confute him;<sup>6</sup> yet an English writer later speaks of “the dark and fearful mysteries” of Mithra, repeating the old insinuation.<sup>7</sup> The Mithraic mysteries, save for the fact that they involved real austerities and a scenic

<sup>1</sup> There is a curious correspondence between M. Lajard's four grades and the emblems of the four evangelists given by Augustine: Matthew=lion, Mark=man (this order often reversed), Luke=ox, John=eagle. See “Variorum Teachers' Bible,” *Aids to Students*, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> See Origen, “Against Celsus,” vi. 27; Cf. Minucius Felix, “Octavius,” c. 9.

<sup>3</sup> B. iii., c. 2; B. v., c. 16.

<sup>4</sup> “*Recherches*,” ii. 135.

<sup>5</sup> Cap. 9. Sainte-Croix offers an extraordinary mistranslation of the passage.

<sup>6</sup> So Porphyry, “*De Abst.*,” ii. 56; a passage which only says that down till the time of Hadrian it was the custom to sacrifice a virgin to *Minerva* at Laodicea.

<sup>7</sup> Wright, “The Celt, the Roman, and the Saxon,” 3rd ed., p. 328. The insinuation is found also in the encyclopædias.

representation of death, were no more dark and fearful than the Christian mysteries are known to have been, not to speak of what these are *said* to have been. There lies against them no such imputation of licence as was constantly brought against the midnight meetings of the Christians, or as is specifically brought by St. Paul against his own converts at Corinth. Their purpose was unquestionably moral.<sup>1</sup> In the words of Suidas, the worshipper went through his trials in order that he should become holy and passionless. In the course of the initiation, as we know from the unwilling admiration of Tertullian,<sup>2</sup> the devotee, called the soldier of Mithras, was offered a crown, which it was his part to refuse, saying that Mithra was his crown. And everything points to the enunciation of a theory of expiation and purification from sin, in which Mithras figured as mediator and saviour, actually undergoing a symbolic sacrifice, and certainly securing to his worshippers eternal life.<sup>3</sup> As to the doctrine of immortality being pre-Christian, it is now quite unnecessary to speak; and the whole Mithraic symbolism implies such a teaching. On most of the bull monuments, you may remember, there stand beside Mithra two figures, one holding a raised and one a lowered torch. These signified primarily sunrise and sunset, or rising spring sun and sinking autumn sun; but, as Lessing long ago showed, they were also the ancient symbols for life and death. Now we can understand how such a cultus, with an elaborate ceremonial and an impressive initiation, with the attractions of august and solemn mysteries and the promise of immortal life, could spread throughout the Roman Empire in the age in which the primitive Roman religion crumbled away before the advance of far more highly specialized and complicated cults. Above all was it popular in the army, which really seems to have been to some extent a school of moral strength and order at a time when an appalling abjection was overtaking the Roman world, men reverencing rank as dogs reverence men. One of the first stages in the initiation, for men, consisted in the devotee receiving a sword, and being called a soldier of Mithra.<sup>4</sup> Thus Mithraism was specially the faith of the soldiery;<sup>5</sup> and in doing honour to the invincible sun-god Mithra—*Deo Soli Invictæ Mithræ*, as the monuments have it—the Emperor Constantine vied with the most loyal Mithraists

<sup>1</sup> See Origen, "Against Celsus," iii. 59.

<sup>2</sup> "De Corona," c. 15.

<sup>3</sup> See Garucci, "*Les Mystères du Syncretisme Phrygien*," passim. Cf. Windischmann (p. 53) as to the older cultus.

<sup>4</sup> Tertullian, "De Corona," xv.; Garucci, "*Mystères du Syncretisme Phrygien*," 1854, p. 34.

<sup>5</sup> Of old, as we have seen, Mithra was a war-god.

long after his so-called conversion to Christianity.<sup>1</sup> But there were also women worshippers, as we know from at least the grade of lionesses—sometimes oddly named that of hyænas, from a slight blunder in the Greek text.<sup>2</sup> And I think we may infer that this cultus, with its austerities and its solemnities, attracted, on the whole, men and women of the better type. There can be little doubt that the practice of lavish charity among the early Christians attracted to the churches worthless characters, and so promoted demoralization. Mutual help there probably was among Mithraists; but we find no organized almsgiving.

But now comes the great question, How came such a cultus to die out of the Roman and Byzantine Empires after making its way so far and holding its ground so long? The answer to that question has never, I think, been fully given, and is for the most part utterly evaded, though part of it has been suggested often enough. The truth is that Mithraism was not overthrown; it was merely transformed.

Of course we are told that the Mithraic rites and mysteries were borrowed and imitated from Christianity.<sup>3</sup> But the plainest refutation of this notion, as has been pointed out by M. Havet,<sup>4</sup> lies in the language of those Christian fathers who spoke of Mithraism. Three of them, as we have seen, speak of the Mithraic resemblances to Christian rites as being the work of devils. Now, if the Mithraists *had* simply imitated the historic Christians, the obvious course for the latter would be simply to say so. In that case there would be no need to talk of demons; it would be far more effective to charge human plagiarism. Justin Martyr expressly argues that the demons *anticipated* the Christian mysteries and prepared parodies of them beforehand. "When I hear," he says in his Dialogue with Trypho,<sup>5</sup> "when I hear, Trypho, that Perseus was begotten of a virgin, I understand that the deceiving serpent counterfeited also this." Nobody pretends that the Perseus myth, or the Pagan virgin myth in general, is later than Christianity. Justin Martyr, indeed, is perhaps the most foolish of all the Christian fathers; but what he says about the anticipatory action of the demon or demons plainly underlies the argumentation also of Tertullian and Julius Firmicus.<sup>6</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> See his coins. Compare Gibbon, ch. 20, 28.

<sup>2</sup> See De Sacy's note on Sainte-Croix, ii. 128.

<sup>3</sup> So Sainte-Croix, "*Recherches*," ii. 147; and Beugnot, "*Hist. de la Destr. du Pag.*," i. 157, 158.

<sup>4</sup> "*Le Christianisme et ses Origines*," iv. 133.

<sup>5</sup> c. 70.

<sup>6</sup> Plutarch states ("Life of Pompey," c. 24) that Mithraism was first introduced to Rome through the Cilician pirates, whom Pompey put down. Paul, as M. Havet remarks, would be in the way of knowing the cults of Cilicia. Tarsus, indeed, was a Mithraic centre. See Preller, "*Römische Mythologie*," p. 758.



Mithraic mysteries, then, of the burial and resurrection of the Lord, the Mediator and Saviour,—burial in a rock tomb and resurrection from that tomb—the sacrament of bread and water, and the marking on the forehead with a mystic mark,—all these were in practice, like the Egyptian search for the lost corpse of Osiris, and the representation of his entombment and resurrection, before the publication of the Christian Gospel of a Lord who was buried in a rock tomb, and rose from that tomb on the day of the sun, or of the Christian mystery of Divine communion, with bread and water or bread and wine, which last were before employed also in the mysteries of Bacchus, sun-god and wine-god, doubtless as representing *his* body and blood. Nor was this all. Firmicus<sup>1</sup> informs us that the devil, in order to leave nothing undone for the destruction of souls, had beforehand resorted to deceptive imitations of the cross of Christ. Not only did they in Phrygia fix a young man to a tree in the worship of the Mother of the Gods, and in other cults imitate the crucifixion<sup>2</sup> in similar ways, but in one mystery in particular the Pagans were wont to consecrate a tree and, towards midnight, to slay a ram at the foot of it. This cult may or may not have been the Mithraic; there is a very strong presumption that it was. You have all seen a strange Christian symbol in which Christ is represented as a lamb or ram, carrying by one forefoot a cross. Now, we know from Porphyry<sup>3</sup> that in the mysteries “a place near the equinoctial circle was assigned to Mithra as an appropriate seat. And on this account he bears the sword of the Ram [Aries], which is a sign of Mars [Ares].” The sword of the Ram, we may take it, was simply figured as the cross, since a sword is a cross.<sup>4</sup> Again, Porphyry explains<sup>5</sup> that “Mithra, as well as the bull, is the demiurgos and lord of generation.” Here then would be a symbolical slaying, in which the deity is sacrificed by the deity;<sup>6</sup> and we may safely infer that the symbolic ram in turn would be sacrificed by the Mithraists on the same principle; since we actually know that a slain lamb figured in their mysteries.<sup>7</sup> Now, it is the historic

<sup>1</sup> “*De Erroribus*,” xxviii.

<sup>2</sup> Suggestions of the crucifix appear in the Mithraic monuments. See the development from the winged figure, in Lajard’s “Atlas;” and compare the plate in Bryant, i. 294. That the “crown of thorns” is a variation on a nimbus has long been surmised. Mithra of course had a nimbus (Windischmann, p. 60). And the early Persian sun-god rode “with his hands lifted up towards immortality” (or heaven), “*Mihir Yast*,” 31; in Darmesteter, ii. 152.

<sup>3</sup> “On the Cave of the Nymphs,” c. 11.

<sup>4</sup> Note, on this, the astronomical “crossing” of lines at the “first point of Aries” (see English or Chambers’ Encyc., art. Zodiac); and see it imaged in the old figure in Brown’s ed. of Aratos.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> The people of Crete destroyed a bull to represent the destruction of Bacchus (Firmicus, vi.).

<sup>7</sup> Garucci, “*Les Mystères du Syncretisme Phrygien*,” p. 34.

fact that among the early Christians a ram or lamb was sacrificed in the Paschal mystery. It is disputed between Greeks and Latins whether at one time the slain lamb was offered on the altar, together with the mystical body of Christ; but it is admitted by Catholic writers—and this, by the way, is the origin of a certain dispute about singing the *Agnus Dei* in church—that in the old *Ordo Romanus* a lamb was consecrated, slain, and eaten, on Easter Day, by way of a religious rite.<sup>1</sup> Of this lamb, too, the blood was received in a cup.<sup>2</sup> Take again the curious circumstance that whereas in the Gospels Jesus is said to have been born in an inn stable, early Christian writers, as Justin Martyr<sup>3</sup> and Origen,<sup>4</sup> explicitly say he was born in a cave. Now, in the Mithra myth, Mithra is both rock-born and born in a cave; and a later saying represents him as also supernaturally born of a virgin.<sup>5</sup> And it is remarkable that whereas a cave was (and I believe is) shown as the birthplace of Jesus at Bethlehem, Saint Jerome actually complained<sup>6</sup> that in his day the Pagans celebrated the worship of Thammuz (= Adonis), and presumably therefore the festival of the birth of the sun—Christmas Day—at that very cave.<sup>7</sup>

Other correspondences might easily be traced; as, the building of churches looking towards the east,<sup>8</sup> and the number of the Apostles;<sup>9</sup> but these are enough, I think, to prove the point. Of course those who loyally accept the Christian records as unquestionably true will not be influenced by such considerations; whatever method they may adopt to explain away those parallels

<sup>1</sup> See Bingham's "Christian Antiquities," ed. 1855, iii. 244, 245.

<sup>2</sup> Casalius, "*De Veterib. Christ. Ritib.*," ii. 4, cited by Dupuis.

<sup>3</sup> "Dialogue with Trypho," c. 78.

<sup>4</sup> "Against Celsus," i. 51. Compare the Apocryphal gospels, Protev., xii. 14; Infancy, i. 6, xii. 14. Note, too, that Dionysos was said to have been nurtured in a cave (Pausanias, iii. 24; Diodorus Siculus, iii. 67).

<sup>5</sup> Elhsæus the Armenian historian (d. 480), cited by Windischmann, pp. 61, 62.

<sup>6</sup> Epist. 58, ad Paulinum (Migne, "*Patrologiæ Cursus Completus*," ser. i., vol. xxii., col. 581).

<sup>7</sup> Dionysos, too, it should be noted, was worshipped in caves. Pausanias, ii. 23; Porphyry, cited above.

<sup>8</sup> This, of course, is a usage of almost all religions. Only we know that the Mithraic worship followed it. See Wellbeloved's "*Eburacum*," p. 85.

<sup>9</sup> Apart from the more pressing question whether the Christian legend does not rest on the probable fact of an institution of twelve strictly Jewish Apostles (the true "Twelve Apostles" of the *Didaché* so much discussed in recent years), it has to be noted that Mithra was represented as surrounded by the twelve signs of the zodiac in a particular order, beginning on the right with Aquarius and ending on the left with Capricorn, and that this usage was imitated by the Christians. See the admissions of Wellbeloved (p. 86), as to the zodiacal arch of the Church of St. Margaret's in Walmgate, York. Aquarius to the Christian sense would doubtless represent Peter, especially as the old zodiacs connected this sign with fishing. Note that the old festival of Peter at Rome (Jan. 18th) coincided with the sun's entering Aquarius in the calendar.

which the fathers simply set down to the account of the demon. But those of you who, like myself, cannot see your way to accept as historic truth the central incidents of the Gospel story,—those of you may see in the mystic rites of Mithraism and other old solar religions—rites which symbolized abstract ideas and not concrete facts—the scientific explanation of the Christian phases of supernaturalism. In this way the sacrosanct episodes of the holy supper and the resurrection from the rock tomb, as well as the legend of the birth at Yuletide in a cave,<sup>1</sup> the Sunday worship, and the Easter tragedy, all become finally intelligible to the eye of science. And when we find, in the First Epistle of Peter (ii. 4, 5), a phrase about Jesus being a “living stone,” and read in the gospels how the Lord said, “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church,” we turn from such an obviously unhistoric utterance back to the Mithraic rites, and see in the sacred rock of Mithra, the rock from which the god comes, the source of the Roman legend.<sup>2</sup>

Of course it was not merely Mithraism that was assimilated by Christianity. The new faith absorbed matter from many sides. Take, for instance, the Fourth Gospel, which, written under Alexandrian influences, represents some of the later accretions; and turn to such a story as that of the seamless robe of Jesus. Here is a new myth-motive: whence did it come? Turn to Osirianism, and you find that of Osiris it was taught<sup>3</sup> that his robe, unlike that of Isis, was one, whole, indivisible, that robe being the universal light—the ideal robe of the sun—whereas the light of the moon is variable and chequered, and the robe of Isis accordingly is so; both robes being actually so represented in the mysteries. In the Egyptian teaching, however, we have a poetic idea; in the Christian legend it becomes a meaningless concrete myth, tied to a trivial prophecy. Take again the late miracle story of the turning of

<sup>1</sup> Even the “stable” story has a curious connection with Mithraism. See the Greek formula in Firmicus (v passage corrupt); “The sacred heifers have lowed; hold we the solemn feast of the most august father” M. Darmesteter holds (“*Ormazd et Ahurman*,” p. 152, n.) that “the legends of gods born or reared in stables; among shepherds (Krishna); even that of Mithra as *περὶ ποιῶν*, in virtue of the synonymy of stone, mountain, stable—*adri-gotra*,”—all derive from the widespread bull or cow myth. But for an interesting astronomical signification of the stable (= the Augean), see Dupuis, “*Origine de tous les Cultes*,” ed 1835-6, vii. 104.

<sup>2</sup> The stone myth has very wide bearings. Note the passage in Daniel ii. 34; also the Mazdean element in Zechariah iii. 9. The “seven eyes” are certainly connected with the seven Amshaspands or planetary gods—of whom Mithra was chief (Windischmann, p. 62; Seel, p. 215), as was also Ormazd, according to other texts (Darmesteter, “*Ormazd et Ahurman*,” p. 38). The “fair mitre” raises the difficult question as to the origin of that name.

<sup>3</sup> Plutarch, “On Isis and Osiris,” c. 78. Compare Jamblichus, “On the Egyptian Mysteries,” c. ix.

water into wine. Here is an episode without spiritual dignity—one of the least noble of all the miracle stories. Whence came it? Ask yourself what it is that in actual Nature may be said to turn water into wine, and you soon get the answer. It is the sun, which drives the sap through branch and leaf, and ripens it into fruit and exquisite juice. And when we find that in connection with the worship of Bacchus, sun-god and wine-god, there was in the island of Andros a fountain which was said to yield wine, during the yearly festival of the god, at the nones of January,<sup>1</sup> we need hardly go farther. The fact that the Catholic Church actually celebrates the miracle of Cana at the date at which the Pagans celebrated the Dionysian wine miracle is only a slight additional proof. In the same way we may reasonably surmise that the story of the scourging of the dealers in the temple is a Judaic application of the idea in the figures of the scourge-bearing god, found alike in Egyptian, in Assyrian, and in Gnostic monuments.

Now, these developments of mystical doctrine and symbolism into concrete myth, point to another part of the explanation of the supersedence of Mithraism by Christianity. Religions, we say, like organisms and opinions, struggle for survival, and the fittest survive. That is to say, that one survives which is fittest for the environment—not fittest from the point of view of another and higher environment. Now, what was the religion that was fittest, that was best adapted, for the populations of the decaying Roman Empire, in which ignorance and mean subjection were slowly corroding alike intelligence and character, leaving the civilized provinces unable to hold their ground against the barbarians? Well, an unwarlike population, for one thing, wants a sympathetic and emotional religion; and here, though Mithraism had many attractions, Christianity had more. The beautiful and immortal youth of the older sun-worships, Apollo, Mithras, Dionysos, was always soluble into a mysterious abstraction: in the Christian legend the god was humanized in the most literal way; and for the multitude the concrete deity must needs replace the abstract. The Gospels gave a literal story: the divine man was a carpenter, and ate and drank with the poorest of the poor. So with the miracles. The priesthoods of the older religions always explained to the initiated, in the mysteries, the mystical meaning which was symbolized by the concrete myths; and in some early Christian writers, as notably Origen, you find a constant attempt so to explain away concrete miracle and other

<sup>1</sup> Pliny, "Nat. Hist.," ii. 106 (103), xxxi. 13. Pausanias, vi. 26. Note, too, the story in Pausanias of the placing of empty jars in a locked room in the temple, and finding them full of wine next day.

stories as allegories. But gradually the very idea of allegory died out of the Christian intelligence; and priests as well as people came to take everything literally and concretely, till miracles became everyday occurrences. This was the religion for the dark ages, for the new northern peoples which had not gone through the Pagan evolution of cults, and symbolisms, and mysticisms, but whose own traditional faith was too vague and primitive to hold its ground against the elaborate Christian theology and ritual. But that was not all. The fatal weakness of Mithraism, as pitted against Christianity, was that its very organization was esoteric. Now, an esoteric institution can never take hold of the ignorant masses. Mithraism was always a sort of freemasonry, never a public organization. What the Christians did was to start, like Rome herself, from a republican basis—for, as Dean Milman has put it,<sup>1</sup> the first churches were, ecclesiastically speaking, Greek republican groups—and then to build up a great organization on the model of that of republican and imperial Rome—an organization so august that the very tradition of it could serve the later world to live by for a thousand years. The Christian Church renewed the spell of imperial Rome, and brought actual force to make good intellectual weakness. And so we read that the Mithraic worship was by Christian physical force suppressed in Rome and Alexandria, about the end of the fourth century.<sup>2</sup> Complete suppression, of course, could not be so accomplished; and Mithraic usages long survived. Even in the eighth century we find Church councils commanding proselytes no more to pay worship to fanes and rocks;<sup>3</sup> and there were other survivals.<sup>4</sup> But that was a trifle compared to the actual survival of Mithraic symbols and rites in the very worship of Christ. As to the sacrifice of the lamb we have seen; and though, at the end of the seventh century a general council ventured to resist the general usage of picturing Christ as a lamb, the veto was useless; the symbol survived. Some Mithraic items went, but more remained. The Christian bishop went through a ceremony of espousing the Church, following the old mystery in which occurred the formula, "Hail to thee, new spouse; hail, new light."<sup>5</sup> His mitre was called a crown, or tiara, which answered to the headdress of Mithra and the

<sup>1</sup> "History of Latin Christianity," 3rd ed., i. 36.

<sup>2</sup> Jerome, *Epist. cvii. ad Lætām* (Migne, xxii., col. 869); Socrates, "*Ec. Hist.*," B. vi., c. 16.

<sup>3</sup> "Nullus Christianus ad fana, vel ad Petras votas reddere præsumat," "*Indic. Paganiarum in Consilio Leptinensi*," ad ann. Christ. 743; cited by Bryant, "*Analysis*," i. 294.

<sup>4</sup> See note by Mosheim on Cudworth, Harrison's ed., i. 478.

<sup>5</sup> Firmicus, xx.

Mithraic priests, as to those of the priests of Egypt; he wore red military boots, now said to be "emblematical of that spiritual warfare on which he had entered;" in reality, doubtless borrowed from the military worship of Mithra, dear to the first Christian emperor. And the higher mysteries of communion, divine sacrifice, and resurrection, as we have seen, were as much Mithraic as Christian; so that a Mithraist could turn to the Christian worship and find his main rites unimpaired, lightened only of the burden of initiative austerities, stripped of the old obscure mysticism, and with all things turned to the literal and the concrete, in sympathy with the waning of knowledge and philosophy throughout the world. The Mithraic Christians actually continued to celebrate Christmas Day as the birthday of the sun, despite the censures of the Pope.<sup>1</sup> When they listened to the Roman litany of the holy name of Jesus, they knew they were listening to the very epithets of the sun-god—god of the skies, purity of the eternal light, king of glory, sun of justice, strong god, father of the ages to come, angel of great counsel. Their priests had been wont to say that "he of the cap" was "himself a Christian."<sup>2</sup> They knew that the good shepherd was a name of Apollo;<sup>3</sup> that Mithra, like Jesus, carried the lamb<sup>4</sup> on his shoulders; that both were mediators, both creators, both judges of the dead; that the chief mysteries of the two cults were the same. Their mystic rock, Petra, was presented to them in the concrete as the rock Peter, the foundation of the Church. Their solar midnight worship was preserved in midnight services, which carried on the purpose of the midnight meetings of the early Christians, who had simply followed Essenian, Egyptian, and Mithraic usage; there being no basis for the orthodox notion that these secret meetings were due to fear of persecution. Their *mizd*, or sacred cake, was copied in the *mass*, which probably copied the very name.<sup>5</sup> And whereas the religion of Mithra had only indirectly and mystically provided for that human instinct which made the great goddess-worships<sup>6</sup> of antiquity, Christianity

<sup>1</sup> See the Sermons of Saint Leo, xxii. 6, cited by Dupuis and Havet. Others than Mithraists, of course, would offend, Christmas being an Osirian and Adonisian festival also. Macrobius, "*Sat.*," i. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Augustine in Joh. i., Dis. 7; cited in King, "Gnostics," p. 119.

<sup>3</sup> Macrobius, "*Saturnalia*," i. 17.

<sup>4</sup> Or the bull. See Lajard's "*Atlas*," Pl. xcii.; and Garucci, as cited.

<sup>5</sup> King, "Gnostics," p. 124, following Seel.

<sup>6</sup> Yet there are signs of combination of Mithraism with the goddess cults of the Empire. Eunapius (cited in edit. note on Hammer-Purgstall, "*Mithriaca*," p. 22) represents the same priest as hierophant of the Eleusinia, and father of the initiation of Mithra; and Apuleius ("*Metamorphoses*," B. xi.—Bohn. ed., pp. 238, 241) speaks of "the priest Mithras," in the mysteries of Isis. Again we find Mithra identified with Sebazius, son of the Phrygian Cybele (Garucci, "*Mystères*," pp. 14, 18; Preller, "*Römische Mythologie*," p. 761).

appealed to it directly and concretely, taking from an older faith the very image of Isis the virgin, carrying her babe in her arms, as Alitta, the Syrian goddess, had done;<sup>1</sup> taking from the temples of Paganism the very statues of black basalt which represented Isis, and calling them by the name of Maria;<sup>2</sup> just as, by the same law of assimilation, the Pagan faith in multitudinous local deities was conciliated and re-established by the institution of a multitude of miracle-working and prayer-hearing saints, as well as of locally miraculous shrines of the virgin. We are taught that at that era the world entered on a new way of life and of philosophy, breaking wholly with the past. *Exitiabilis superstitio!* This, too, is folly.

It has chanced, indeed, that those Christian sects which most fully adopted the theosophies of Paganism have disappeared under the controlling power of the main organization, which, as I have said, held by a necessity of its existence to a concrete and literal system, and for the same reason to a rigidly fixed set of dogmas. We know that the Gnostics adopted Mithra, making his name into a mystic charm, from which (spelling it *Μεθρας*) they got the number 365, as from the mystic name Abraxas.<sup>3</sup> The more reason why Mithras should be tabooed by the organized Church. Thus, then, you can understand why the very name seemed at length to be blotted out. There were in antiquity, we know,<sup>4</sup> quite a number of elaborate treatises setting forth the religion of Mithra; and every one of these has been destroyed by the care of the Church.<sup>5</sup> And yet, despite all forcible suppression, not only do the monuments of the faith remain to tell how for centuries it distanced its rival; not only do its rites and ceremonies remain as part of the very kernel of the Christian worship; but its record remains unknowingly graven in the very legend on the lintel of the great Christian temple of Rome, destined to teach to later times a lesson of human history, and of the unity of human religion, more enduring than the sectarian faith that is proclaimed within.

<sup>1</sup> See the figure in Layard, "Disc. in the Ruins of Nin. and Bab.," 1853, p. 477; copied in Rawlinson's "Herodotus," i. 257.

<sup>2</sup> King, "Gnostics," p. 173.

<sup>3</sup> Windischmann, p. 59, citing Jerome, in *Amos*, c. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Porphyry, "On Abstinence from Animal Food," iv. 16.

<sup>5</sup> It is remarkable that even the treatise of Firmicus is mutilated at a passage (v.) where he seems to be accusing Christians of following Mithraic usages; and at the beginning, where he may have made a similar proposition.

# M U H A M M A D A N I S M .

BY G. W. LEITNER, LL.D.,  
M.A., Ph.D., D O.L., etc.

MY special knowledge of Muhammadanism began in a mosque-school at Constantinople in 1854, where I learnt considerable portions of the Koran by heart. I have associated with Muhammadans of different sects in Turkey, India, and elsewhere, and have studied Arabic, the language in which their sacred literature is written. I may at once point out that without a knowledge of Arabic it is impossible to exercise any influence on the Muhammadan mind; but I would add that there is something better than mere knowledge, and that is sympathy: sympathy is the key to the meaning of knowledge—that which breathes life into what otherwise would be dead bones.

There are instances of eminent scholars who, for want of sympathy, have greatly misjudged Muhammadanism. Sir William Muir, e.g., has been led into very serious mistakes in dealing with this religion.

Let us hope that the present occasion may help, in however humble a degree, to cement that "fellow-feeling" which ought to exist between all religions.

"In proportion as we love truth more and victory less," says Herbert Spencer, "we shall become anxious to know what it is which leads our opponents to think as they do."

More profound is the Tibetan Buddhist Lama's vow never to think, much less to say, that his own religion is better than that of others. The edicts of Asoka, carved on rocks, and more than monumental brass, also recommend his subjects to praise the faith of others.

As regards the great religion with which we are dealing to-day, I have adopted the term "Muhammadanism" in order to limit this address to the creed as now professed by Muhammadans. If I had used the better heading "Islám," which means the creed of "resignation to the Divine will," a more extensive treatment would have been necessary than can be afforded in the course of an hour.

Muhammadanism is not the religion of the Prophet Muhammad, because he only professed to preach the religion of his predecessors, the Jews and the Christians; both these faiths being



stages in the faith of "Islám," of which the form preached by Muhammad is the perfection and seal.

"To walk with God," to have God with us in our daily life with the object of obtaining the "peace that passeth all understanding," "to submit to the Divine will"—this we too profess to seek; but in Muhammadanism this profession is translated into practice, and is the corner-stone of the edifice of that faith.

In one sense Muhammadanism is like, and in another sense unlike, both Judaism and Christianity. To walk with God, to have God ever present in all our acts, is no doubt what the prophets of both these religions taught; and in that sense they were all Muhammadans, or rather "Muslims," namely, professors of the faith of "Islám."

But so far as I know anything either of Judaism or of Christianity, the system preached by Muhammad was not merely imitative or eclectic; it was also "inspired,"—if there be such a process as inspiration from the Source of all goodness. Indeed, I venture to state in all humility, that if self-sacrifice, honesty of purpose, unswerving belief in one's mission, a marvellous insight into existing wrong or error, and the perception and use of the best means for its removal, are among the outward and visible signs of inspiration, the mission of Muhammad was "inspired."

The Judaism known to Muhammad was chiefly the traditional "Masôra" as distinguished from the "Markâba;" indeed, pure Judaism as distinct from Buddhistic or Alexandrian importations into it.

The Christianity also which Muhammad desired to restore to its purity was the preaching of Christ, as distinguished on the one part from the mystic creed of St. Paul, and the outrageous errors of certain Christian sects known to the Arabs.

Muhammad thought the Jews would accept him as their Messiah, but the "exclusiveness" of the Jews prevented this. He, however, insisted on the Arabs and on "believers" generally participating in the blessings of their common ancestor, Abraham; and his creed, therefore, became Judaism plus proselytism, and Christianity minus the teaching of St. Paul.

The idea of Muhammad not to limit the benefits of Abraham's religion to his own people, but to extend them to the world, has thus become the means of converting to a high form of culture and of civilization millions of the human race, who would either otherwise have remained sunk in barbarism, or would not have been raised to that brotherhood which "Islam" not only preaches but also practises.

The founder of Muhammadanism has been talked of by Christians in the most unworthy manner. Still, at first, he

was regarded as a quasi-Christian Sectarian. Dante refers to Muhammad as a heretic in his "Inferno;" and, indeed, in another sense, he was only a dissenter from one of the many forms which have adopted the appellation of "Christian." Some authors alleged that his religion was taken from the Talmud; but it seems to me that the question of what Muhammadanism really is cannot be summed up better than in stating it to be pure Judaism plus proselytism, and original Christianity minus the teaching of St. Paul. This as regards its theory; in practice it is far more than modern Christianity in its artificial European aspect—the "Sermon on the Mount" translated into daily life.

Every Muhammadan is a church in himself; every one is allowed to give an opinion on a religious matter, on the basis of the belief common to his correligionists. They are not slaves to priests; they pray to God without an intermediary, and their place of worship is wherever they happen to be at the appointed hours of prayer.

Their preachers can also follow other vocations; some of them are shoemakers, etc. But, of course, the bulk of their ministers of religion are so by profession in regulated communities.

There is no such thing as a Pope among them.

Any ordinary Muhammadan may say, "By resigning myself to the Divine will I am myself the representative of the faith of which the Prophet Muhammad was the exponent." Indeed, the bulk of Muhammadans throughout the world are guided by the *consensus fidelium*. These are the Sunnis or Ahl Jemaa't, in contradistinction to the second most important sect the Shiahs, which considers Muhammad and his lineal successors to be practically infallible. The Shiahs venerate the hereditary principle, and their religious profession is regulated by the interpretation of the Koran and of their traditions by their leading priests or learned men, the Mujtahids. (See Appendix III., on "The Mahdi and the Khalifa.")

Muhammad himself did not make any claim to infallibility. On one occasion he had a revelation censuring himself severely for having turned away from a beggar in order to speak to an illustrious man of the commonwealth, and he published this revelation, the very last thing which he would have done had he been an impostor, as ignorant Christians call the great Arab prophet. Allow me now to read to you the letter of an eminent religious Muhammadan functionary, the present Sheikh-ul-Islam of Constantinople, to a convert, Mr. Schumann, which I humbly venture to endorse, except the following passage: "On the day when you were converted to Islám your sins were taken into account." This sentence cannot be taken literally; for, according

to the Muhammadan faith, the sins of all are taken into account. There is a revered saying that the objection of one who is learned is "better than the consent of a thousand who are ignorant;" and, without in the least professing to be learned, I can, from a Muhammadan standpoint, claim the privilege of a believer in objecting to a ruling which has probably been rendered incorrectly in translation, and which contradicts the injunction addressed to *all* to "avoid sin and apply yourselves to righteousness," whether Jew, Christian, or Muhammadan. (See annexed letter of the Sheikh-ul-Islam, extracted from the *Diplomatic Flysheets* of the 16th October, 1888, on which Dr. Leitner's Lecture was, to some extent, a running commentary.)

With regard to the outward signs of a Muhammadan, such as prayer, alms, fasting, and pilgrimage, the religious books contain the necessary instructions. As for prayer, they practically enforce that "cleanliness is next to godliness," for ablutions precede prayer. The regulations regarding both acts are minute, and as to their ritual it is not of every Christian that a priest could say what the Sheikh-ul-Islam says of every Muhammadan: "These things, however, may be learnt from the first Mussulman that you meet."

Their alms, which are rightly called only a pecuniary prayer, consist in giving up a portion, not less than a fortieth part, or  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., of their goods to the poor. These alms go into the public treasury, and are applied, among other things, to the redemption of slaves, another subject regarding which Christians ignorantly accuse Muhammadans of a state of things which Muhammad did his best successfully to mitigate by a practical legislation towards its eventual abolition. (See Appendix II. at the end of this address.)

But, reverting to alms, in order that these be acceptable to God, the givers must show that they are in lawful possession of the gift (which, it is needless to add, can be increased beyond the legal minimum). It would not do "to rob a till in order to build a chapel," but those who voluntarily give more than the fortieth part will be rewarded by God.

The pilgrimage to Mecca is of great importance, as Muhammadans meet there from all parts of the world; it is a bond of union, and creates a real visible Muhammadan Church, such as the Christian world, with its innumerable subdivisions, does not yet possess for the assembly of an entire Christianity; it is, moreover, a great stimulus for the diffusion of culture by means of a common sacred language, the Arabic, in the same way as was the case in Europe when Latin was the one language spoken by all learned persons in addition to their native tongue. Thus by knowing Arabic one has a key not only to the

Muhammadan religion, but also to the heart of the whole Muhammadan world. In Asia, and even Africa, in spite of the so-called semi-barbarism, any abstract Arabic word can become the common property of all the Arabic-speaking or Arabic-revering nations, and Muhammadanism thus possesses an agency of civilization and culture which is denied to other faiths.

Fasting is, of course, a mere discipline, but it is also of great hygienic value, and, as stated by the Sheikh-ul-Islam, "The fulfilment of the duties of purity and cleanliness, which are rational, also fulfil the hygienic requirements of the physician."

Indeed, as regards Muhammadan rules generally regarding abstention from wine, pork, improperly slaughtered flesh, the disposal of what would be injurious if not quickly made away with, etc., it may safely be asserted that they were not laid down to worry those who fulfil them, but to benefit them in body and mind.

With regard to social gradations the rich man is considered to be the natural protector of the poor, and the poor man takes his place at the table of the rich. Nowhere in Muhammadan society is there any invidious distinction between rich and poor; and even a Muhammadan slave is not only a member of the household, but has also far greater chances of rising to a position in the Government or in Society than an English pauper.

Food is given to any one who needs it, and charity is administered direct, and not by the circuitous means of a Poor Law system. Indeed, from a Muhammadan, as also from the Buddhist, point of view, the giving of charity puts the giver into a state of obligation to the receiver, since it enables the former to cultivate his sense of benevolence.

In the same way, among the Hindū Brahmins, when even a "sweeper" comes to ask for alms at a Brahmin's door, the latter worships him for having afforded him the opportunity for the exercise of charity. Such a view, in my humble opinion, includes all the "graces" of the truest and widest Christian charity, and, from that standpoint, I can only say that the best "Christians" I ever knew were a Brahmin who had never heard the name of Christ, an old Muhammadan who revered Him as a prophet, and a poor Jew who nursed through a long illness the Christian who had deprived him of his little all.

Servants, although they partake of meals after, fare exactly the same as, their masters.

In a Mosque there is perfect equality among worshippers; there are no pews; the "Imám" of the place or any other worshipper may lead the prayers, and nothing can be a more devotional sight than a crowd of Muslim worshippers going through their various genuflexions with perfect regularity and silence.

Englishmen object to formalism, but they often worship routine and the letter, rather than the spirit, of rules. Indeed, it may be said that English precision is at the root of a great deal of evil; and if charity in its widest sense is the greatest of virtues, the formalities that accompany its collection and distribution in this country destroy its very grace.

We do not seem to recognize that laws are laid down for general guidance, and that the letter of such laws is not to be the lord but the servant of our interpretation of them. Above all, our abstract charity, our abstract religion, our hard-and-fast rules are in contrast to the personal, individual, concrete, dramatic, allegorical, and imaginative which characterize the Eastern faiths and forms that have been adapted by us. There would be no Nihilists and no Socialists in Europe were Western society constituted on the basis of Muhammadanism; for in it a man is not taught to be dissatisfied, as is the great effort, aim, and result of our civilization.

I would now draw your attention to what the Sheikh-ul-Islam says regarding marriage. The marriage contract requires the attestation of two witnesses, and constitutes a religious act; but it is not sacramental, as with Christians and Hindūs.

The husband is to enjoy his wife's company, but he cannot force her to accompany him to another country; he is, however, in the latter case, bound to continue to maintain her.

When a connubial quarrel takes place arbitrators may be chosen, and divorce is allowed if the parties cannot remain together otherwise than in a state of enmity. You will admit that Muhammadan legislation on the subject of marriage does not deserve the opprobrium that has been cast on it by Christian writers.

The statement that among Muhammadans there exists the power of unlimited marriage along with unlimited power of divorce is not true. Divorce is not such an easy matter, as you may have perceived from the letter of the Sheikh-ul-Islam, for it cannot be obtained without the judgment of arbitrators.

Besides, at marriage a certain dowry is named, which has to be paid to the wife in the event of divorce; and many women fix the amount in a sum far larger than the husband would ever be able to pay, in order to secure themselves against the danger of a divorce.

The Christian, or rather Hindu, view of marriage, that it is spiritual, is no doubt higher than the Muhammadan; but the practice of Christian countries generally shows less observance of the sacredness of the marriage-tie than that of Muhammadans.

Among the Hindūs marriage, being spiritual, cannot be dissolved, and among the Roman Catholics it can only be

dissolved with the greatest difficulty; but whether the sacramental or the contract view of marriage be taken, the union is, as a matter of fact, in the vast majority of cases, of a permanent nature in all countries and among all religions, though I grieve to have to admit that, having lived among Muhammadans from 1848 to within two years, in spite of their "unlimited opportunity for divorce," I have known of more cases of divorce among Christians than among them. I have also no hesitation in affirming that in kindness to their family, to the learned or aged, to strangers, and to the brute creation, the bulk of Muhammadans are a pattern to so-called Christians.

A few words may be said regarding the much-abused subject of Muhammadan polygamy. Apart from the fact that polygamy tends to provide for the surplus female population in the few places where there is such surplus, and that polygamy is a check on prostitution and its attendant evils, as also a protection against illegitimacy of birth, it cannot be denied that the vast majority of Muhammadans have only one wife. This is largely due to the teaching of Muhammadanism.

Muhammad came into a state of society where to have a daughter was considered to be a misfortune, and where female children were sometimes buried alive. There was no limit to the number of women that a man could marry, and they were a part of the property divided among the heirs of a deceased person.

On the unlimited polygamy which produced this state of things Muhammad put a check; he directed that a man could only enter into the marriage contract with two, three, or four wives, if he could behave with equal justice and equal love to them all.

Unless he could do that he was only permitted to marry one wife. Now as, practically, no one can be, as a rule, equally fair and loving to two or more wives, the spirit of Muhammad's legislation is clearly in favour of monogamy.

He also raised woman from the condition of being a property to that of a proprietor, and he constituted her as the first "legal" sharer whose interests the Muhammadan law has to consult.

The allegation has been made against Muhammad that by his own example he justified profligacy.

Let this statement be examined. Fortunately, we are not dealing with a legendary individual, but with an historical person, whose almost every act and saying is recorded in the Hadís or collections of traditions, which, next to the Koran, form a rule of Muhammadan conduct. These "Acts of the Apostles" are subjected to the most stringent rules of criticism as to their authenticity, and unless the story of an act or saying of the Prophet can be traced to one of his own companions, it is thrown

out of the order of traditions, which form the subject of critical investigation as to their actual occurrence adopted by Muhammadan commentators. We have certainly far less authority of a secular character for the sayings and doings of our Lord Jesus Christ. Well, then, on what authorities, good, bad, or doubtful, do the allegations of Muhammad's profligacy rest? I have no hesitation in affirming that, following every such story to its source, it will be found to be entirely unsubstantiated, and that, on the contrary, to the very great credit of Muhammad, in spite of many temptations, he preserved the utmost chastity in a state of society which did not practise that virtue.

Living among heathen Arabs, he remained perfectly chaste till, at the age of twenty-five, he married a woman of forty (equivalent to one of fifty in Europe); and he married her because she was his benefactor and believed in his sacred mission. As he stated years after her death to a young and beautiful wife, who was "only jealous of the old and dead Khadija," in answer to her question "Am I not so good as she?" "No, you are not so good; for she believed in me when no one else did, she was my first disciple, and she honoured and protected me when I was poor and forsaken."

During the whole period of his marriage with her, twenty years, he remained absolutely faithful to her.

It is true that, at the age of fifty-five, we find him taking wife after wife; but is it not fair to assume that in the case of a man who had shown such self-control till that age, there may be reasons other than those assigned by Christian writers for his many marriages? What are these reasons?

I believe that the real cause of his many marriages at an old age was charity, and in order to protect the widows of his persecuted followers.

Persecution was great against his followers, "the believers in one God." At one time no one was allowed to give them food, and some of them were obliged to escape to Abyssinia in order to seek a refuge with the Christian king of that land. The king did not give them up to their persecutors. Some of them died in Abyssinia; and their widows, who would otherwise have perished, Muhammad took into his household. The idea that the Prophet had any improper intention in so doing is without foundation; especially if we consider that he had given abundant proof during his youth of continence. The story of the marriage of the Prophet with Zainab, the divorced wife of his freedman and adopted son, Zeid, has also given rise to misconception. It may be premised that the heathen Arabs considered it wrong to marry the divorced wife of an adopted son, although they had no objection to marry the

wives (excluding their own mother) of a deceased father, just as some people nowadays might not mind breaking the Decalogue who would on no account "whistle on a Sunday."

Muhammad excluded all this "nonsense" by saying that an adopted child was not a real child; and this being so, it could not be supposed to be within the prohibited degrees. To affirm this truth and not to justify a new marriage the Prophet received a revelation, which has been misconstrued as a sanction to a wrongful act.

It really seems to me that if men cultivated something like true charity they would have a different view of other religions than they now hold, and that they would endeavour to learn about them from their original sources, instead of from the prejudiced second-hand reports of the opponents of these religions.

Celibacy is rare among Mussulmans, and there are very few, if any, marriageable women that are not married.

Adultery is punished equally both in man and woman. The culprit is flogged with a hundred stripes publicly.

With regard to concubine slaves, the Muhammadan law will not allow their offspring to be branded with infamy; and the child of a slave inherits with the children of her master. Among us an illegitimate child has little protection, and even our highest ideal of marriage falls far short of, e.g., the Hindū marriage in a good caste, in which the wife prays for the salvation of her husband, as without her prayers his salvation could not be accomplished.

The Muhammadans have no taverns, gaming-houses, or brothels, nor have they any idea of legalizing prostitution; and as regards their general conversation it is infinitely more decent, as a rule, than that of most Europeans. I have seen young Muhammadan fellows at school and college, and their conduct and talk are far better than is the case among English young men. (See my letter on "Islām and Muhammadan Schools," published in the *Daily Telegraph* of the 2nd February, 1888, Appendix IV.)

Indeed, the talk of the latter is often such as would incur punishment in a Muhammadan land.

The married woman is in a better legal position than the married Englishwoman, and she can give evidence in attestation of a birth, marriage, or death, which is still denied to a woman in republican France.

As regards the assumed immutability of the Muhammadan religion, there is a liberty of interpretation of the Koran which enables "Islam" to be adapted to every sect and country: e.g., the law laid down for its interpretation that a conditional sentence has to take precedence of an absolute one, is one that secures every reasonable liberty of conscience: e.g. "fight the infidels" is



an absolute sentence; "fight the infidels if they attack you first" is a conditional sentence, and has therefore first to be taken into account in determining the much misunderstood question of the "holy war," or rather "Jihád," against infidels. Indeed, no such war is legitimate except in self-defence against those who persecute Muhammadans *because* they believe in one God and who turn them out from their homes; in other words, as in the case of the Muslim refugees to Abyssinia (see Appendix V., article on Jihád). As for religious toleration, there is much more of it in practice among Muhammadans than *has* been the case at any rate, in Christian countries; and had this not been the fact, the Armenian, Greek, and Jewish communities would not have preserved their autonomy, religion, and language under, say, Turkish rule,—a rule, I may add from personal knowledge, which offers many lessons of forbearance and humanity to Christian legislation.

Muhammad included Jews and Christians among Muslims; or those who believe in God and the last day "shall have no fear upon them, neither shall they grieve."

In the chapter on "Pilgrimage" in the Koran, the object of a religious war is declared to be the protection of "mosques, synagogues, and churches," for in them alike "the name of God is frequently commemorated."

Is not this as tolerant a position as we have only reached after centuries (if, indeed, judging from the present foolish crusade against Muhammadanism, which we are confounding with slavery, we *have* reached such a position)?

I know many Muhammadans who have subscribed to churches; now many Christians subscribe to mosques? Yet in them "the name of God" is, indeed, commemorated.

As for Muhammadan persecutions of Christians, they do not compare with the massacres of Muhammadans by Christians. *Ab uno disce omnes*. When Omar, in order to avenge a former massacre of Jerusalem by the Crusaders, swore to put the defenders of the city to death he refrained from doing so after taking it; for, as he said, "I will rather incur the sin of breaking my oath than put to death a single creature of God."

I cannot conclude this address better than by insisting on the fact that the Jewish, Christian, and Muhammadan religions are sister-faiths, having a common origin; and by expressing a hope that the day will come when Christians will honour Christ more by also honouring Muhammad.

There is a common ground between Muhammadanism and Christianity, and he is a better Christian who reveres the truths enunciated by the Prophet Muhammad.

## APPENDICES.

### CONTENTS.

- I. LETTER FROM THE SHEIKH-UL-ISLÁM, OF CONSTANTINOPLE, TO MR SCHUMANN, OF HANOVER, A CONVERT TO MUHAMMADANISM, IN *Diplomatic Flysheets*, AND REMARKS THEREON BY DR. LEITNER.
- II. DR. LEITNER'S LETTER IN THE *Athenæum* ON "MUHAMMADANISM AND SLAVERY."
- III. DR. LEITNER'S LETTER IN THE *Times* ON THE "MAHDI AND THE KHALÍFA."
- IV. DR. LEITNER'S LETTER IN THE *Daily Telegraph* ON "ISLÁM AND MUHAMMADAN SCHOOLS."
- V. DR. LEITNER'S ARTICLE IN THE *Asiatic Quarterly Review* ON "JIHÁD," OR THE MUHAMMADAN SO-CALLED "HOLY WAR."
- VI. LETTER TO DR. LEITNER FROM NAWÁB IMÁD NAWÁZ JANG, A MUHAMMADAN NOBLEMAN, ON "THE REVIVAL OF MUHAMMADAN LEARNING," AND REPLY OF DR. LEITNER, QUOTED IN THE *Bombay Gazette*.

### APPENDIX I.

#### THE SHEIKH-UL-ISLAM ON THE DUTIES OF THE MUHAMMADAN RELIGION.

(See *Diplomatic Flysheets*, October 16th, 1888.)

THE following extracts from a long letter by Ahmed Essad, Sheikh-ul-Islam at Constantinople, are translated from *La Revue de l'Orient*, 2nd September, which prefaces the letter by the following statement. We give only parts of the letter, which, it will be observed, is purely ethical, and entirely free from polemical theology. We append to these extracts some remarks by Dr. Leitner.

"In the month of January last we published a letter from His Highness the Sheikh-ul-Islam in reply to a demand made to him by M. Schumann, a man of letters residing at Hanover, to authorise him to embrace Islám. In this letter, it will be recollected, His Highness showed M. Schumann that his conversion to Islám was not subordinate to his consent, and that to be converted it was sufficient to believe and to proclaim his belief. After receiving this letter M. Schumann became a convert to Islám, and announced the fact to the Sheikh-ul-Islam. His

Highness has just replied to the neophyte by the following letter, which we find in the *Levant Herald* :—

#### EXTRACTS.

After compliments.

"As I have already told you in my previous letter, on the day when you were converted to Islām your sins were annulled, and it is only from that day that any account of your good or evil actions will be taken. Henceforth you must fulfil your religious obligations and duties, avoid all which is forbidden and considered as sin, and apply yourself to righteousness."

The four duties are then stated, Prayer (which includes ablution), Alms, Fasting, and Pilgrimage

"Religious books contain detailed indications of the manner of making ablutions and of praying. But you may learn from the first Mussulman whom you meet the rules which regulate ablutions and prayer

"Alms, which are really only a pecuniary prayer, are the act of a person who, in order to please God, gives up the portion legally determined of his goods to the use of the poor. He, for instance, who has 200 grammes of silver money, the possession of which goes back at least for a year, ought to give, when the year is ended, the fortieth part of this money, say five grammes, to poor Mussulmans, but beyond this he is not bound. Only, he who, voluntarily, gives greater alms, will be recompensed by God"

Fasting and the Pilgrimage to Mecca are then explained

"We fulfil this kind of religious duties in order to conform ourselves to the Commandments of God and to merit eternal felicity. But if we enter, in this respect, on a circumstantial examination, we arrive at the conviction that the fulfilment of these duties also secures the happiness of this life. The purity and cleanliness, necessary for prayer, are absolutely conformable to the hygienic prescriptions of physicians. Similar ordinances in their useful results are worthy to be considered as apostolic miracles.

"As to the question of alms, it would be necessary to enter into great detail to demonstrate their great importance to the welfare of human society. Thanks to this rule the poor man recognises the rich man as his natural protector. Besides, assistance to the poor being for the Mussulman a natural thing and a daily action, there are many persons who, as regards alms, go beyond the legal proportion. The poor man takes his place at the table of the rich; the guests who arrive, at the moment of placing themselves at table, are welcomed and loaded with attentions. To whatever condition he belongs we give a morsel of bread to the poor man who is hungry and asks for it; this is why, among Mussulmans, it has become proverbial to say that no one dies of hunger. The servants are fed on the same dishes as their masters, only they are served after the masters. With regard to the manner of living, there is similarity and proximity between the poor and the rich. In the Mosque there reigns a complete equality and a perfect liberty. For these reasons we do not remark in the Mussulman social organization a very great distance between the two classes; and the boundary which separates the rich from the poor not having, as in Christian States, a violent and precise character, we see among them no trace of disagreement and enmity; consequently among Mussulmans there exist no factions such as the Communists, the Socialists, and the Nihilists, and there is no probability that a similar danger should arise in the future. The extension and the rapid progress of the Mussulman religion in all parts of the world, the fidelity to their religion of which the Mussulman people have given proof, and the constancy in their convictions which they have displayed in the midst of so many crises and of immense difficulties, are a natural consequence of these truths."

"Marriage is a contract between the husband and the wife, and they alone are the contracting parties; only, this contract must be formulated in the presence of two witnesses. If, under this aspect, marriage must be considered as a matter of business, from a different point of view it constitutes a religious act."

"By marriage the husband acquires the right to enjoy, in a legal manner, his wife's company, but by this her liberty is in no way infringed. A married woman

disposes of her goods as she thinks proper; she buys and sells without her husband having the right to interfere. As to the husband, he must provide for the dwelling, the subsistence and the clothing of his wife. If the husband repairs to another country, he cannot force his wife to follow him, and, at the same time, he cannot cease to maintain her."

If married people quarrel, arbitrators are chosen from the relations on both sides.

"If these arbitrators succeed in reconciling them, well and good, but if they do not, what must be done? Since, in consequence of their misunderstanding, the respect for conjugal rights and the accomplishment of the divine orders are rendered impossible, what remedy is there but divorce? Would it be logical and reasonable to say that they should continue to dispute, tied as they are by the marriage contract? Admitting that the principal object of marriage is to protect from sin, can it serve as a reason for the continuance of a state of enmity."

The reasons for permitting polygamy are entered into, and the difficulties in the way of treating more than one wife with justice. "Thus among Mussulmans there are few who have more than one wife." The Sheikh-ul-Islam concludes.

"Let us pass from the theory of these questions to their practical result. We say, then, that many Christian men and women remain celibate, while celibacy is rare among Mussulmans. A Mussulman girl, even though ugly and poor, often succeeds in finding a husband.

"In towns where the inhabitants are all Mussulmans, there are no taverns, gaming houses, or brothels, nor is there even an idea of organising prostitution, as if it were a natural necessity of social conditions. The contagious diseases engendered by prostitution are unknown, thanks to the Mussulman religion.

"If we examine attentively the political conditions and system approved by Islám concerning governmental institutions and public administration, we see that the State which should conform itself strictly to this system and to these conditions, would secure to itself, on the one side, the principles of liberty most in conformity with justice and equity, and, on the other, the discipline and power proper to absolute governments." And, thus, this State would have a power and a strength of which no politician has conceived.

"The serious examination of the preceding questions demonstrates that the Mussulman religion secures not only eternal felicity, but perhaps also happiness in this world."

#### REMARKS ON THE ABOVE BY DR. LEITNER.

I return with many thanks the paper containing the excellent letter of the Sheikh-ul-Islam, of Constantinople, to M. Schumann. It places the question of physical purity as preliminary to prayer, of alms as a pecuniary prayer, of fasting as a religious exercise, of the pilgrimage to Mecca as a link of brotherhood among Muhammadans of all countries, and of the Muslim form of marriage as a preventive of immorality, on a clear footing, justified alike by piety and the laws of health and of social order. The only point on which I venture to differ from His Eminence ("Altesse" is surely too worldly a title for a spiritual Dignitary in a *Republie* of religious *equals*) is where he is alleged to state, perhaps owing to the fault of a translator, that it is only from the day of the conversion of M. Schumann to Islám that "an account will be kept of his actions whether good or evil." This view, however natural and excusable in a Muhammadan religious teacher under the special circumstances of the case, is, I submit, not at all borne out by the spirit of the Koran, which clearly acknowledges as spiritual brethren the "Ehl-Kitáb" or "possessors of a religious book," namely, the Old Testament, the Psalms, and the New Testament. I respectfully maintain that the actions, whether good or evil, of all men, are accountable from a Muhammadan standpoint, even if they are not Muhammadans, and that Christians and Jews, who possess a religious "book," are specially on that responsible footing, even when not converted to Muhammadanism.

In quoting a few of the most striking passages of the Koran on Non-Muhammadans, I do not wish to enter into a controversy which, perhaps, it was not very

expedient to raise, as to whether Non-Muhammadans are "accountable," but the following passages show the brotherhood among all who have a sacred "book," the Old or the New Testament, or the Koran, and their publication may be productive of good feeling among Muhammadans, Christians, and Jews :

*Chapter ii., verse 59.*

"Verily those who have believed (in the prophets) and those who have become Jews, and the Christians and the Sabeans, whosoever hath believed in God and the Last Day, and *hath done that which is right, they shall have their reward with their Lord* and no fear upon them, neither shall they grieve."

Some, no doubt, suppose that this verse has been abrogated by a subsequent revelation (in Chapter. III., 79th verse), but this has a special meaning, and is contradicted by the whole history and tenor of Muhammadan relations with others, as, indeed, no such relations could exist, if there were no difference between the good and evil actions of Non-Muhammadans. We find the following in

*Chapter xxix., verse 45.*

"Dispute not with the people of the Scripture (Christians and Jews) unless in the kindest manner, *except against such of them as deal evilly*, and say ye, "We believe in that which has been sent down unto us (the Koran) and also in that which has been sent down unto you (the Old and New Testaments), *and our God and your God is one*, and to Him are we self-surrendered (resigned or Muslims)."

Even the object of a religious war, the much-misrepresented "Jihád," is stated in the chapter on "Pilgrimage" to be "*the protection of mosques, synagogues, and churches, in which the name of the one God is preached.*"

No doubt, as the Christians, especially of Spain, began to persecute the Muhammadans, the more hostile verses of the Koran and of tradition (Hadís) began to fall in with the circumstances, but let us hope that these will again change to the originally intended kindly feeling among the sister-faiths of Islám ; Christianity and Judaism.

G. W. LEITNER.

ORIENTAL INSTITUTE, WOKING, *October 9th, 1888.*

## APPENDIX II.

### PROFESSOR LEITNER'S LETTER ON MUHAMMADANISM AND SLAVERY.

KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON, *March 18th, 1884.*

In a letter from Dr. Rohlf's to the Secretary of the Anti-Slavery Society, the great traveller asserts that "at present Islám has triumphed, and slavery, the inevitable consequence of Muhammadan government, is re-established." Other eminent authorities, writing on the subject of General Gordon's "slavery" proclamation, have similarly assumed that Muhammadanism is in favour of that hateful institution.

This is as great a libel on that religion as the assertion would be on Christianity, that it was in favour of slavery because Christ, although confronted by one of its cruellest forms in the Roman Empire, did not attempt to legislate, as Muhammad did, for its eventual abolition in this world, but merely promised spiritual freedom to the repentant servants of sin, whether bond or free ; whilst St. Paul sends the runaway slave Onesimus back to his Christian master Philemon, even after converting him (a process which would *ipso facto* have set him free among very pious Muhammadans), and, in numerous places, evidently refuses to enter into the

question of the emancipation of slaves, except in a spiritual sense. Even the reference to "man stealers" in 1 Tim. i. 10 is simply part of a statement of various classes of evildoers with which "the Law" had to deal: "The law is good if a man use it lawfully; knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient . . . for 'men-stealers,' for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be anything that is contrary to sound doctrine." The allusion is referred to the Jewish Law, according to which "He that stealeth a man and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death" (Exod. xxi. 16). In the New Dispensation, however, which modified the severity of that law, there is "neither bond nor free, but Christ is all." Every one was to abide in his own calling, the converted slave being the Lord's freeman and the converted freeman the slave of Christ (1 Cor. vii. 20-22).

As one who has taken a part, however humble and small, in the exposure of certain forms of slavery and the slave trade, I would beg leave to point out the injustice and impolicy of identifying Muhammadanism with the conduct of its unworthy professors, the slave dealers, instead of merely advocating principles which are deeply implanted in both Christian and Muhammadan human nature, are sanctified by both religions, and give England a hold not only on the Liberal sentiment of Europe and the United States, but also on that of the whole Muhammadan world. Indeed, it would be well if as regards Muhammadanism generally our statesmen, scholars, and missionaries sought for points of agreement rather than for those of difference, and appealed less to the preconceptions of their public than to their desire for correct information.

According to the Koran no person can be made a slave except after the conclusion of a sanguinary battle fought in the conduct of a religious war (Jihād) in the country of infidels who try to suppress the true religion. Indeed, wherever the word "slave" occurs in the Koran it is "he whom your right hands have conquered," or a special equivalent for *neck* = he whose neck has been spared, thus clearly indicating "a prisoner of war" made by the action not of one man only, but of many. The idea is similar to that conveyed by the Greek *Ἀνδράροδος*, which implied that the victor placed his foot on the neck of the conquered, who became his future slave. Limited, however, as the legal supply of slaves is according to the Koran (which would alone suffice to justify the abolition of slavery among all pious Muhammadans), the Arabian prophet further recommends, "When the war has ended restore them [the slaves or prisoners] to liberty or give them up for a ransom" (Sura xlvii. 5). Again, in the 16th Sura of the Koran, Muhammad, in his very novitiate, boldly confronts a state of society in which even the female belongings of a deceased were sold or distributed as part of his property (a position from which he raised women by constituting them "legal sharers," or the first care of Muhammadan law, and conferred on them rights similar to those lately conceded in this country by the Married Women's Property Act). Surrounded by powerful and hostile relatives and tribesmen, the owners of slaves, who sought an excuse for his destruction, he invites them to divide their income or provision (*riqg*) with their slaves in equal shares: "God has made some superior to others in income, and yet those who have been so benefited do not divide their income with those whom their right hands have conquered, so that each [master and slave] may have an equal share. How dare they thus to gainsay the goodness of God?"

And elsewhere, "Alms (which procure righteousness) are destined . . . to the redemption of slaves" (as the ruling Begum of Bhopal professed to have done not long ago, when she had bought and imported slaves for the ostensible object of setting them free). Further (Sura xxiv. 33), "If any of your slaves asks for his manumission in writing give it to him, if you think him worthy of it, and give him also some of the wealth which God has given you." This passage enables slaves, who thus acquire the disposal of their time, to redeem themselves by a certain amount of labour or on payment of a sum not exceeding their market value, and often paid for, in part or whole, especially among Shiahs, out of the public tax *zehkdt*. The reconciliation of a separated married couple should be preceded by the ransom of a slave, and, if none can be found, the husband should feed sixty poor, or else fast for two months (Sura lviii. 4, 5). Whenever the sense of happiness, including that of conjugal felicity, predisposes the heart to gratitude towards the

Creator, or whenever the fear of God or of a punishment, or the desire of a blessing, affects, as such motives can affect, the daily life of a Muhammadan, the emancipation of a slave, as a most proper act of charity, is recommended. In short, the "cliff," or narrow path to salvation, is charity. "What is the cliff? It is to free the captive [or slave]" (Sura xc. 10-15).

— Descending to the second source of Muhammadan law, the authenticated tradition or *Hadîs*, we find Muhammad stating that "the worst of men is he who sells men;" slaves who displeased their master were to be forgiven "seventy times a day;" no believer could be made a slave, and "in proportion to the number of redeemed slaves will members of the body of the releasing person be rescued from the [eternal] fire" (*Hadîs*, accepted by Sunnis and Shi'ahs alike, and communicated by Jâbir Ibn Abdullah).

The history of Muhammadanism has since shown not only the admission of the converted slave on equal terms into Muhammadan society (a circumstance which does not exist to the same extent among Christian *negroes*), but also his rise in several Muhammadan countries, including Egypt, to the highest positions in the state, whether as an individual or as a member of a whole class of slaves, and *irrespective of colour*. The brotherhood of Muhammadanism is no mere word. All believers are equal and their own high-priests. Zeid, the ex-slave, led Muhammad's troops, whilst the often blind "Hâfiz," or reciters of the Korân of the present day, have, as it were, their prototype in the blind *negro* Bilâl, the first "muezzin," or caller to prayers, perhaps the most famous name in Muhammadan Asia and Africa. The Ghaznavide dynasty was founded by the slave Sabaktagin; the first king of Delhi, Kutbuddin, was a slave, etc.

In India, the authoritative declaration of the Muhammadan law officers of the Sadr Diwânî and Nizâmat Adâlat laid down that only capture in a holy war, or descent from such a captive, constitutes the slave legal to a Muhammadan master. The Sadr Diwânî Adâlat, in 1830, in an appeal, adopted the opinion of its Muftis just noticed, and imposed on the claiming master the burden of proving that the slavery of his claimed slaves was derived from the narrow legal origin defined by the Muftis. The effect of this decision is that no Muslim can ever make good his title to the services of a recusant slave. The Muftis further laid down that "the master can only inflict moderate correction on his slave, and that any cruelty or ill usage inflicted on his slave legally exposes him to a discretionary punishment (*a'qûbat or tazîr*) by the ruling power, and such discretionary power extends to death" (I quote from Hamilton's preface to the "*Hidâya*"). Since the abolition of these officers we have not the same touch with the conservative elements of Muhammadan society, whilst the decisions of our courts are often away from the real point, owing to ignorance of Arabic, without a knowledge of which language it is difficult to have any influence with Muhammadans, and impossible to decide with accuracy any question connected with their law. In 1839, however, the true nature of Muhammadanism was better known by the Indian Government than it is now even by European writers on Muhammadan law. Lord Auckland's Minute on the Indian Law Commission, which reported that "all slavery is excluded from amongst the Muhammadans by the strict letter of their own law," shows that "the abhorrence to slavery entertained by the English functionary" was then, as now, welcome to the respectable native community. Even among those who benefited by the trade, "a degree of moral turpitude attached" to the purchase of prisoners of war, "which, if insisted on, would tend considerably to diminish the evil," although "slaves are not only extremely well treated by their Arab masters, but enjoy a very considerable degree of power and influence. . . . They were everywhere the best fed men, and seemed happy and comfortable. . . . The cruel treatment of slaves has been the reproach of European rather than of Eastern nations" (I quote from Reports to the Resident of the Persian Gulf in 1838).

Persons who confess the unity of the Godhead cannot be made slaves, and therefore there has practically been a constant struggle between the Muhammadan slave dealer, who, being devoid of any religion himself, sought to save appearances by forcing his captives to declare themselves, rightly or wrongly, to be idolaters (as in Africa), or at least (as in Chitral and Bukhara) to be Shi'ah heretics—and the Muhammadan missionaries, who, as in Africa, have been steadily and success-

fully endeavouring to reduce the area from which slaves could be drawn by converting the *negroes* to Islām. Dr. Rohlfs, in his condemnation of that faith, must have had the Muhammadan slave dealers rather than the Muhammadan missionaries or religion in his mind. Mr. Rassam has already stated that "the slave dealers are looked upon everywhere by the respectable class with disgust, especially when they are known to encourage kidnapping even Moslem and Christian children." And again. "Nor did I find in all my intercourse with African or Arabian tribes in the suppression of the slave traffic any difficulty or danger, but, on the contrary, the different chiefs with whom we negotiated consented most willingly and cheerfully to put down the slave trade; and the most wonderful thing was they all kept their pledges faithfully."

In Turkey I have been acquainted with more than one family in which the newly-purchased slave was taught a trade and set up in business after an apprenticeship of seven years—a common practice; and I knew a pious boatman who, as soon as he had saved enough money, devoted it to the purchase and manumission of a slave. Of similar instances I often heard during the time preceding the legal abolition of the slave trade in Turkey—that deserted true friend of England, and once her lever on the Muhammadan world—and I have met many pious Muslims in various Muhammadan countries whose ambition it was to ransom slaves. Indeed, words of piety, chivalry, truth, and compassion have not lost their power to stir the adherents of that creed, and I therefore regret that it should be deemed to be expedient to withdraw, for the purpose of what can only be a temporary deception, from the commanding position of advocating the abolition of slavery in every one of its forms. It may have the effect of conciliating Zebehr Pasha, but it will alienate from England most honest Mussulmans. To abuse Muhammadanism for the maintenance of an institution which it had to tolerate and for which it had to legislate is one thing, but to adopt indigenous methods of appeal to Muhammadan humanity, based on their own revered associations, is quite another. Indeed, even if slavery were an integral part of the Muhammadan religion, as it most certainly is not, "Moslem lawgivers may ameliorate the condition of slaves, close slave markets, and check the diabolical traffic in the south," to quote Sir William Muir.

I go, perhaps, further, and assert that the Muhammadan religion can adapt, and has adapted, itself to circumstances and to the needs of the various races that profess it in accordance with "the spirit of the age." I have ever found Muhammadans, of whatever country, eager to welcome any appeal in favour of humanity or progress, if urged in a sympathetic and intelligible manner. Perhaps the times are past when to ensure the eventual triumph of principles that have made a country great a patriot may prefer to perish rather than snatch an evanescent success, but the time has, fortunately, not yet arrived in which to support slavery is not alike a blunder and a crime.

G. W. LEITNER.

ATHENÆUM, 15-3-84.

### APPENDIX III.

#### DR. LEITNER ON THE MAHDI AND THE KHALIFA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "DIPLOMATIC FLYSHEETS"

ORIENTAL INSTITUTE, WOKING, December 17th, 1888

SIR,—By all means republish my letter on "The Mahdi and the Khalifa." Unfortunately, the object for which it was written at the end of 1883 has not been achieved, and the authority of the Sultan of Turkey, which would have been all-powerful then as the Khalifa of the Sunni Muhammadan world, has been much shaken by our intervention. Even now, however, it is not too late to invoke his



co-operation in restoring "true Islāmism" to the Soudan and in effectually leading a "Crescentade" (if the term may be permitted) against slavery, which, by a most authentic tradition, accepted by both Shiāhs and Sunnis, the prophet Muhammad condemned in the statement, that, "*the worst of men is he who sells men.*" At the same time, it need not be supposed that the Soudan Mahdi's "successor" or "Khalifa" uses the title to designate that he is "the successor" of the PROPHET in his secular sovereignty over the faithful. With him it may merely mean that he has succeeded the late Mahdi, just as the title Mahdi or "guided" was assumed, not to arrogate the powers of the Imām Mahdi who is "the expected" of the Shiāhs, "the chief of the age," but merely to indicate that he was "guided" by God to be a guide to other Muhammadans. This any Sunni teacher could be under the Sunni Khalifa or Commander of the faithful, and both the Soudan Mahdi and his present Khalifa or "successor" would acknowledge the Sultan as *the* Khalifa in the political sense of the term. If Mahdism has become heretical, and, therefore, dangerous to British interests, it is because *we* have disseminated the Shiah view of Mahdism by crippling the authority of the Sultan as Khalifa.

The mere fact that the Soudan Mahdi has a Khalifa or successor, at once destroys any attempt to invest him with the prestige of the Shiah Mahdi, who is to reappear on the last day of judgment, and who, therefore, obviously could have no successor, not to speak of the title "Khalifa" being scarcely attractive to Shiah ears. In other words, whatever the Soudan Khalifa may say of his hostility to the Turks, he is still a Sunni, and as such cannot refuse to recognize the Sultan of Turkey as *the* Khalifa of the Sunni Muhammadan world.

G. W. LEITNER.

#### THE LETTER REFERRED TO.

(From the *Times* of 2nd January, 1884)

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "TIMES."

SIR,—“The Mahdi is the Devil.” This information was imparted at Suez to Professor Monier Williams, whose letter you publish in the *Times* of to-day, by an Egyptian boatman, apparently a Muhammadan of the Sunni persuasion. Before, however, assuming, with the learned Professor of Sanscrit, that the above remark shows the “intense *odium theologicum* between the two opposing religious parties of Mussulmans” (Sunnis and Shiāhs), “the Egyptians” being “mostly Sunnis,” it would be interesting to ascertain whether the startling statement at the commencement of this letter was made in “pigeon English” or in Arabic. If the former, it may have been a sarcastic insinuation that the Mahdi was a clever fellow, or that he would give us trouble; if the latter, it might have indicated a vague religious notion, but then the word “Satan” (certainly not “Iblis”) would have been used; and this would also have been the case if the boatman had been a good English scholar. The “man at the helm” evidently knew his business, for in reply to the somewhat incautious inquiry by a chance “fare,” as to “whether he preferred Arabi or the Khedive,” he said, “We want neither the one nor the other; we want bread,” thus indicating by the use of the word “want,” whether in Arabic or Suez-English, that men in his position had nothing to do with politics, either as a matter of necessity or of propriety, but were only concerned with getting their daily bread, if not a bakhshish from the English traveller. The boatman certainly never meant to imply, as is suggested, an equal dislike to Arabi and the Khedive; at the utmost if he indeed uttered the *vox populi*, his was a modern squeak for the old cry that went up to Joseph from unhappy Egypt when it sold itself into slavery to Pharaoh for bread; “buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh.” Finally, the Egyptians are not “mostly” Sunnis, or the Mahdi and his followers Shiāhs, which would give a point to the Professor’s quotation, but they are all Sunnis.

It is to be regretted that the scholars, statesmen, and generals who have written to the *Times* on the subject of the Mahdi had not the opportunity of consulting

Professor Willhams, for he evidently knows the direction which the consideration of the question ought to take, though, perhaps, not the question itself. You, however, are aware that, from either an academical or the Muhammadan standpoint—both of which must now be taken into account by practical politicians dealing with the present or any future Mahdi—whether the still *de facto* Khilāfat of the Sultan of Turkey is to be supported by England, or whether its downfall is to be accelerated in order to evoke aspirations in the Muhammadan world for another powerful head of Islām, if not for the advent of a Messiah (the second coming of Jesus being expected by Muhammadans) or Mahdi, or whatever the sighed-for curer of admitted ills may be called, there is a deeply distressed and discontented community, ignorant of the history and true application of these terms in their own religion.

There was a time when the co-operation of the Sultan of Turkey and of his spiritual adviser, the Sheikh-ul-Islam, would have been welcomed in a religious war against Russia in Central Asia,\* there was another time when attempts were made to lower the prestige of the Sultan among the faithful in India and elsewhere by contesting his claim to the Khalifat (or more correctly Khilāfat), on the ground that he was not a descendant of the "Prophet Mahomed," and did not even belong to his tribe of the Koreish. Both advocates and opponents, whether European or Muhammadan scholars, did their cause an infinity of harm by unsettling the historical basis of the question, and by encouraging, in consequence, the growth of all sorts of heterodox notions in the Muhammadan world, which was before so susceptible to the influence of England.

Dull, therefore, as any treatment of the subject away from current politics may be, I must beg for the indulgent consideration of the following aspect of a question which has been much obscured by both European and Muhammadan writers.

In the domain of practical politics connected with "the Eastern question" it does not matter whether the head or heads of Islām (for there have been, and can be, several at a time) can prove Koreish descent or investiture by a real Khalifa in past history, in order to claim the obedience of the Sunnis, who form the great majority of Muhammadans, so long as he carries out, in their opinion, the Divine law. The doctrine is distinctly laid down, though I have never seen it quoted by any of the writers on the subject, that a Khalifa may be a "perfect Khalifa" or an "imperfect Khalifa," a difference which applies to other conditions of men or monarchs, and which is certainly established in Muhammadan history. "A perfect Khalifa" is merely the ideal of a viceregent of the prophet. He must be, in spite of his titular feminine termination, a man, of age, free from bodily and mental infirmities, learned, pious, just, a free man (not a slave, as in the case of some dynasties), and, of course, of Koreish descent; in fact, an Admirable Crichton and a "Defender of the Faith," and yet he would not be a Khalifa at all unless he possessed the supreme qualification, that of having the power to enforce his commands, just as a man might be a good Christian without being a monarch, or might even be a Christian monarch without being a good Christian.

Traditions are conflicting on the point of Koreish descent being essential to the Khilāfat. As long as the Khalifas happened to be Koreishs, it was convenient to point out that the prophet had made them the ruling tribe "even if only two persons remained in it." Others alleged that he had predicted that there would be no perfect Khalifa thirty years after his death, and yet Koreishs ruled long after that period. He, at all events, nominated no successor or viceregent, and left his election to the assembly of the Faithful, with the inevitable result that one party wanted both the prophet's mantle and the secular power to remain in the family, and the other party wished to get the power, at least, into the hands of "the best man" to be appointed by themselves.

The confusion between the infallible Imām or spiritual *antistes* of the Faithful and the fallible Khalifa or viceregent of the Moslems began with the earliest times of Islām, and led to the main division of Muhammadanism into the sects of Sunnis and Shiah. The former are so-called because they are guided by "rules and the consensus of the Faithful (ahl-Sunnatwa Jamā'a't)." It follows from this that Sunnism is essentially a democratic theocracy, while Shiah belief

\* By England?—Ed. D.F.S.

"follows" the hereditary descent of its spiritual chief from Mahomet, by Fatima and Ali, as the very reason of its existence. In most Muhammadan authorities, where the Khilâfat is spoken of, the word "Imâm" is used, and in others it is implied. The confusion was welcome to the writers, because it saved their conscience and occasionally their necks, and because it slurred over a difficulty which, in my humble opinion, with every deference to the venerable commentators, the Koran and the practical attitude of Muhammadan States and nations, both now and in the past, towards the question of the Khilâfat, amply explain.

All Sunnis are equal. They possess a continually living Muhammadan Church in the consensus of the assembly of the Faithful. The Khalifa, if there be any, for which there is no absolute need, is the first among peers, so far as he possesses most power to carry out the Muhammadan law. Had the Sultans of Turkey not committed the mistake of subordinating the priesthood or judiciary (to which any Sunni may aspire) to the secular power, the presumed free opinion of his spiritual advisers would, indeed, have carried weight throughout the Sunni Muhammadan world, and would have made the Sultan an uncontested Khalifa. Even then, however, had he tried, beyond complimentary *quasi*-investitures of rulers of Yarkand, Bokhara, Afghanistan, and other Muhammadan countries, to interfere in the slightest degree with their internal affairs, he would, with all respect to him as Khalifa, have been rightly confronted by the lawful opposition of the Sunni subjects of those "Umrâ-ul-mu'menin," or "Rulers of the Faithful," unless, indeed, he had the power of enforcing his decree. If he has not that power coupled with the consensus of the Faithful, he is not the perfect Khalifa, at all events where it is so contested.

The Grand Sharif of Mecca, with whom most regrettable, and once unnecessary, negotiations are, and have been, carried on, not only by the Sultan, is not a Khalifa, although this sacred personage is of the purest Koreish descent and has all the qualifications of a "perfect Khalifa," except the essential one of having an army under his command. "An imperfect Khalifa," however, is he who stands at the head of the Sunni world as a Muhammadan ruler, however deficient he may be in all the desirable qualifications, except the all important one to which I have referred. Indeed, he may be a very wicked man, as may be gathered from the following passage in the Koran, when the angels expostulate with God for creating man as his Khalifa—"Wilt thou create one as thy Khalifa who will do iniquity on earth and unjustly shed blood?" (I quote from memory, as it is very many years since I learnt the Koran by heart in a theological school at Constantinople, to which I was admitted by exceptional favour.)

The Abbasside, Ummiyade, and other Khalifas were of the bluest blood, and yet were scarcely perfect Khalifas. In short, by admitting the claim of the Sultan's Khilâfat, we do neither more nor less than is warranted by the consensus of the faithful of his persuasion, and we gain, as long as he has any power, the advantage of being in sympathy with the bulk of the "orthodox" Muhammadan world, whereas by discussing pretensions with which we have no concern, and by confusing the "Imâmat" (the spiritual headship of Islâm) with the *de facto* Khilâfat, we raise a storm of which a cloud is already on the horizon. The common sense of Sunniism is a safe and sufficient guide in this matter, if left to itself, as also the supposed kindred question of the "Jihâd" or the holy war against infidels, on which more than one volume would have been unwritten had it been generally understood to mean merely "an effort" which is only lawful, if almost certain of success; otherwise, as elsewhere, patriotism becomes flat rebellion.

Far different is the case with Shiâhs. To them the Khalifa is a dead letter and the "Imâm" a living being. The special sense of Imâm is that of spiritual head. Thus, in the Koran, God appoints Abraham, after testing his complete obedience, as an "Imâm for Mankind" though he refuses to make the dignity hereditary since the offspring might not be free from sin, which Abraham, as an Imâm, by implication, was. It will be remembered that a similar guarantee was not required when man was created God's Khalifa, but, be that as it may, the hereditary descent of the Imâm is the special property of the Shiâh persuasion. When the popular assembly at which the just claim of the chivalrous relative, and another "light" of Mahomed, His Highness Ali, was rejected in favour of Muawiya, the consolation still remained to the lovers of justice, Adilias, as the Shiâhs are more

properly called, that whoever had usurped the *de facto* secular dominion of the Mussulmans, the spiritual head, the Imám, was still theirs, and would remain with them in his lineal descendants. They alone are the "guides" (the root from which "Mahdi" is formed) of nations in both secular and spiritual matters.

Deprived of the former, the spiritual rule was handed down from father to son, until the twelfth and last Imam, Muhammad Mahdí, who disappeared from earth (in 265 A.H. or in 878-79 A.D.) in order to return with the day of judgment. At all assemblies, however, of believing Shíahs, the Imán Mahdí, who is also called the ruler of worlds, is invisibly present. The Magian basis of belief has never been entirely destroyed in Shíah Persia, and it is still the feeder of a vivid and artistic imagination in contrast to the monotony and practical sense of orthodox Sunniism, but for political purposes the fanaticism that can be evoked by the spread of the doctrine that the leadership of Islám belongs to the Imám, which is the inevitable result of denying the Khiláfat of the Sultan on the ground of his not being a Koreishi by descent, is far more dangerous than the voluntary subordination of Sunnis to the *fast accompli* of the Sultan as the Khalifa for the time being.

Unfortunately, surrounded as the Sultans have been by flatterers or servile instruments of their will, and owing to an impulse from without which I can only vaguely indicate, the suicidal notion has gained a firm footing at the Sublime Porte that the Sultan is a sort of Muhammadan Pope, and more or less doubtful documents have been disinterred to show that the last Khalifa had in 1519, if I remember rightly, made over the Khiláfat to the Ottoman Sultan Salm, while on a visit to Constantinople. Even if this was not done under duress, it proves nothing, for the Khiláfat is not hereditary according to Sunni notions, and Sultan Salm was not elected, although, once in power as the chief, or a great chief of Sunnis, his claim, or that of his descendants, is sufficiently ratified by the simplicity of "the consensus of the faithful," beyond which it is unnecessary and unsafe to go. Equally unnecessary flirtations for a spiritual sanction of the claim to a perfect Khalifatship have been carried on with the Sharif of Mecca and are now invoked, not so much against the Mahdí as against the growing agitation among the Arabs and other Muhammadans. That prelate would be more than human if he did not tacitly support a leaning in favour of the sanctity of Koreish descent. Indeed, the innumerable progeny of Sayyads, or descendants of the prophet among Sunni Muhammadans, have been more or less active propagators of the heresy of hereditary sanctity. Many educated Sunnis, especially those who enjoy Persian literature, profess or feel a secret "affection for the House of Ali," and indignation at the treatment it received by the Khalifa, whom the "Jemá'at" elected, while it is to be feared that many unscrupulous Shíahs, who, mistaking the doctrine of "Taqqia" or denial of their faith which is, unfortunately, permitted to that sect in times of extreme danger and among fellow-Mussulmans only, pass themselves off as Sunnis in order to propagate the fanatical doctrine of the Mahdí. How far the presence of a "green-turbaned Sheikh," as suggested by Sir Samuel Baker, with the troops to be sent (?) against the present usurper of that name, would be an advantage or a new source of danger, depends not only on the individual who may be selected for the suggested mission, but also on a number of circumstances of which only those can judge who know the wheels within wheels of the inner Muhammadan life, as they may affect him.

As for the "pre-eminently black" Soudan Mahdí, who, if correctly reported to the *Times*, explains, characteristically enough, his name to mean "given" instead of the Shíah "guided," I notice that the African traveller Massari declares that his "insurrection was provoked chiefly by the untoward interference of the Egyptian Government in religious matters, and by their oppression of the people."

Your faithful servant,

G. W. LEITNER

LONDON: December 26th, 1883.

## APPENDIX IV.

## ISLÁM, AND MUHAMMADAN SCHOOLS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE DAILY TELEGRAPH."

SIR,—Having had the exceptional opportunity of studying Arabic and the Koran at a Muhammadan Mosque school at Constantinople, both before and after the Russian War in 1854-56, and having since inspected hundreds of Mohammedan schools in India, not to speak of receiving the detailed reports of several thousands of these schools, I ask leave to protest against certain sweeping assertions lately made to the effect that they are dens of iniquity. It is, as regards these schools, an utterly unjustifiable libel. Deviations from morality are rendered almost impossible in them, owing to both scholastic and family organisation, and the influence of the admirable religious treatises and books on conduct (Akhlaq—qualities) which have to be read by the student. At the first-mentioned of these schools primary education was given to both boys and girls together (some of the latter wearing the half-veil of betrothal). Precocious as Easterns are deemed to be, there was never the slightest approach to impropriety in the school in question. A few boys once threw stones at some Christian lads, and this misconduct was immediately punished by the Imám of the Mosque, and was not repeated. The youths in what may be "called the higher form" were examples of good behaviour, and, indeed, the placidity of the Oriental temper is generally a sufficient law in itself. Vice is not so alluring as in Europe, and although the ideal in our schools may be higher, the practical purity in Muhammadan schools is probably greater.

In none of the schools that I have inspected in India did I hear of any cases of impropriety of any kind, except in some boarding-houses attached to Government schools. In fact, the religious sentiment, the discipline of reverence and obedience, the inter-dependence or co-operation of teacher and parent, seem to me to render departures from morality far more difficult in Muhammadan than in Government schools in India, in which religious teaching is ignored, and even the introduction of a reader on morals and conduct (of little use among Orientals without a religious basis), has only quite recently been ordered by the Government of India. In my humble opinion, our greatest mistake in that country has been our system of secular education, and our displacement of the indigenous schools which ought to have been developed so as to combine ancient culture with modern requirements.

As for the wider question of the respective merits of Christianity and Muhammadanism as civilising agencies, allow me to observe that no person unacquainted with Arabic can discuss, at any rate, the theory of the latter religion, which is far more interwoven with the practice of the every-day life of its professors than, unfortunately, is Christianity. At the same time, there is no reason why, in our relations with Muhammadans, we should not emphasise the points of agreement of our respective faiths, rather than their differences.

Muhammadans recognise Christians and Jews as "Ehl Kitab," or possessors of a (sacred) book. In the solemn "covenant with the Creator" into which the boy enters on leaving school he confesses his faith in these books. The Koran enjoins the protection of mosques, synagogues, and churches, in which the name of the one God is preached, as the special object of the effort (Jihád) of a true believer. Jesus is called the Spirit and Word of God, and His miraculous conception and glorious return are accepted in a sense which is not irreconcilable with doctrines that have been held by Christian sects. Muhammadans have liberally supported Christian schools and even churches, though few Christians have subscribed to mosques. Under Turkish rule, the Greek, Armenian, and Jewish denominations have preserved their autonomy for centuries. In India the "Kázi" is little more than tolerated, and numerous Muhammadan endowments have been curtailed, mis-applied, or "resumed"—an euphemism for confiscation. These

should be restored, and their educational side be developed in accordance with the practical, as well as the religious, requirements of the Muhammadan community.

The social economy of Muhammadans, for which there is scriptural precedent, provides for women, and gives them greater legal rights than are possessed by Englishwomen, even since the Married Women's Property Act of 1882. Indeed, nothing, except perhaps the Hindu family life in the higher castes, can exceed the respect, tenderness, purity, and legitimate influence of women in the Muhammadan household. The "beau sexe" forms no subject of conversation among Muhammadan as among Christian youths, and its seclusion is the protection given to what is precious and weak. The pious Muhammadan widow is proverbial as a patroness of education. The kindness of Muhammadans to dependents, their humane treatment of animals, "who also return to the Lord," their great charity, and the simplicity which characterises the true believer should draw us to Him, and, instead of clamouring against "the false prophet," our missionaries would do well in cementing an alliance between the sister-faiths of Islām and Christianity. Even now many a good Muhammadan would rather send his boy to a missionary school, "because the Bible, at any rate, is taught there," than to a Government school, where there is "nothing" (in the form of religious instruction). Indirectly, also, the unexpected effect of Christian teaching in missionary schools in very many places is to increase the conversion of Hindus to Muhammadanism, for reasons which are too long to explain. In my humble opinion we ought to set aside the first hour in Government schools in India to the separate religious teaching of the various denominations frequenting them in their own faiths, the remaining five hours of secular instruction being enjoyed in common by all denominations. Unless we do this we practically condemn the Muhammadan either to give up the worldly advantages of modern education, or else to abandon what he considers most sacred, and that is, his religious training. "Religious neutrality" should mean that "religious impartiality" which gives a share of the taxation of Orientals to what they value most, their religion, and if we wish to attach Muhammadans to British rule, we must give them "dun wa dunya" (religion and worldly advantages), and believe, with the Emperor Akbar, that "Government and religion are twins," for just as no Government can last that destroys the religious sentiment among its subjects, so also can no Government prosper that does not support their respective faith with equal generosity and justice.

It is, however, the special alliance of Islām and Christianity which I would urge, not only from a religious, but also from a political standpoint. There was a time when the Englishman was looked upon as the natural protector of the Muhammadan world, chiefly owing to the traditional friendship with Turkey, the ruler of which is the *de facto* Khalifa of the Sunni Muhammadans, who also form the majority of our Muhammadan fellow-subjects. This friendship should be strengthened, and among minor measures I would urge the admission of Muhammadan youths (as, indeed, also of Rajputs) of good birth into our military schools, with the view of their being employed, with exactly the same prospects of promotion as European officers, in the Indian army of the future, which will have to be very largely increased.

In conclusion, allow me to express the conviction that to advances such as I have ventured to indicate, made in a true Christian spirit to the professors of a sister-faith, the followers of Muhammad will cordially respond, much to the advantage of real religion throughout the world, and to the legitimate promotion of British interests, which will otherwise deservedly suffer at the hands of a new rival in the affections of Muhammadans.

Your obedient servant,

G. W. LEITNER.

January 26th, 1888.

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## APPENDIX V.

## JIHAD.

## I.

THE subject of *Jihad* is so thoroughly misunderstood both by European scholars and by the bulk of Muhammadans themselves, that it will be well to point out what really constitutes *Jihad*. In order to do so, it is necessary to analyse the word, and to show when and how it was first used.

Etymologically the root is *Jahd*, "he exerted himself," and the substantival infinitive that is formed from it means "utmost exertion." Its first use amongst Arabic authors is that particular exertion which takes place under great difficulties, and, when applied to religious matters, it means an exertion under religious difficulties on behalf of the true religion. Keeping in mind the strictly logical, philosophical, historical, and ethnographical applications of each Arabic root, it will be seen at once how a word of this kind would be subject to interpretations according to circumstances. Taking into consideration the surrounding life of an Arab, we are confronted first and foremost with his domestic and natural relations. We then follow him out of his tent, and we see him deal with his camel or his horse, we follow him on predatory expeditions, and we see him in the lonely desert as he complains of the disdain of his beloved, of the arrogance of a neighbouring tribe, of the melancholy prospects of his country, and of the perversity of his heart in not finding full solace in community with God. Here are all obstacles to be overcome, and if he forces his camel or horse to take a desperate ride through the night so as to surprise the violators of his peace before the early morn, it is *Jihad*: if he appeals to his kinsmen to shake off their lethargy and to rally round the tribal standard or to spread the opinions of the true faith it is *Jihad*, and if he abstains alike from worldly cares and amusements in order to find that peace which meditation alone can give in spite of an obdurate heart it is *Jihad*. Nor can the student's *Jihad* as poring over his books, the merchant's *Jihad* in amassing money, the ploughman's *Jihad* in winning food from an obstinate soil, be forgotten. So that when people say that *Jihad* means the duty of the Muhammadans to wage war against a non-Muhammadan Government or country and call this *Jihad* (although it is possible to conceive that under certain circumstances this use of the word might be legitimate), they really talk nonsense, and pass an undeserved libel on a religion with which they are not acquainted. It would be more just to deduce sanguinary precepts from the Old Testament, or to find an encouragement to slavery in the Epistle of St. Paul which enjoins Onesimus, the runaway Christian slave, to return to his heathen master. If Christian theologians, bearing in mind the nature of the mission of our Saviour, find a voluntary sacrifice for the salvation of mankind in Him, Who on the cross complained that God had forsaken him, we might as well pause before we explain *Jihad* as meaning in its entirety what it might mean in the mouths of Muhammadan warriors. If it is the duty of the Christian soldier to fight for his government, irrespective of the cause in which he is engaged, it would clearly seem that it was not less his duty to fight for that Government when engaged in a crusade against the unbeliever or against the oppressors of the Christian community. Similarly, if the Muhammadan warrior is engaged in a Crescentade against those who do not allow their Mussulman subjects to perform the commonest of religious duties, who expel them from their homes and confiscate their property, simply and solely *because* they are Mussulmans, if such oppression is committed as a breach of Treaty, if even a single Muhammadan cannot live undisturbed by the infidel, it does not seem to be an unrighteous cause for him to exert himself in an effort of *Jihad* which will then assume a peculiar sense. "Inter arma silent leges," to which we may add "et religio," though not necessarily every form of "pietas," and we may still have our pious warriors, who died in the Holy Land; and the Saracens

may also have their pious martyrs or "Shahid" who perished fighting on infidel soil.

After this lengthy, but not unnecessary, preliminary observation on the meaning of the word *Jihad*, I will now examine the causes which have led to its present gross mis-interpretation, and I shall then quote the passages bearing on the sacred war and on the conditions under which alone it can be waged. This inquiry will not only be of academical interest, but also perhaps of some political importance, because it is immediately connected with the question of the *Khalifa* and of the *Imam*, as understood by the two great sects, the *Sunni* and *Shi'ah*s respectively, and by the *Sunni* sub-sects of Muhammadan subjects. The matter is still veiled in considerable obscurity, in spite, if not in consequence, of the explanations that have been given from interested standpoints. We shall then be able to understand the precise authority of the Sultan of Turkey on the Muhammadan *Sunni* world; we shall then discover whether and how far the Mahdi was right in opposing Egyptian encroachment and the invasion of the foreigner, and, if he was right, whether this fact has, or can have, the faintest influence on the attitude of Muhammadans under Christian rule, whatever their condition or treatment. I shall show that it has not, and cannot have, the faintest influence on the attitude of Muhammadans under Christian rule, whatever their condition or treatment. I shall show that it has not, and cannot have, such an influence from a religious point of view, and I shall go further and prove that the most suspected class in the Muhammadan community, the so-called *Wahab*s, is the one that, under all circumstances, is the foremost in deprecating resistance to constituted authority, however obtained and by whomsoever exercised. With the utter submission of private interests and feelings to a usurper we have no sympathy, as being opposed alike to common sense and the natural feelings of mankind, but we have no hesitation in asserting that it is impossible for any modern Christian Government to commit those acts which would alone give a colour of justification to a *Jihad* by its Muhammadan subjects, even with the prospects of success and the temptations held out by a victorious neighbouring Muhammadan power among the least patient of our Muhammadan fellow-subjects.

An Islamic Confederation, therefore, as suggested in the last number of the *Ittala*, a Persian newspaper published at Teheran, under the presumed direction of the Government of the Shah, may be an interesting and perhaps even a politically important suggestion. To consider for a moment that a *Shi'ah* interpretation of *Jihad* will have an effect on *Sunnis*, or that a *Shi'ah* explanation of *Jihad* is consistent with their religion if it implies an attack on non-Muhammadan Governments, especially by their own subjects, who are assumed to be under a tacit treaty of allegiance with it, would be far indeed from truth. We ourselves entirely sympathize with every effort to cement the feeling of brotherhood among the various Muhammadan sects, but we are equally convinced that, in proportion as it rests on a religious basis and as that basis is understood, the result will be the deepening of the loyalty of our Muhammadan fellow-subjects.

Assuming the translation of the *Ittala* article given by the *Globe* to be correct, I find nothing in it that is an appeal to passion or prejudice. There is nothing in the passages quoted from the Koran which can be construed as an incitement to rebellion. "The hand of God would be over their (the believers') hands," "superior worth would belong unto God, His apostle, and the true believers, and the unbelievers would be smitten with vileness and afflicted with poverty," are evidently passages capable of another interpretation than that of waging war with unbelievers. If the religion of the Gospel and of universal brotherhood says that it has not come to bring peace to the world but strife, or if it enjoins "to give Cæsar what belongs unto Cæsar, and to God what belongs unto God," it may be inferred that it would be unlawful to give to Cæsar what belongs to God, or to say there is peace when there is no peace. No doubt the *Ittala* refers to the doctrine of *Jihad*, just as an oppressed Christian community would, in the words of Milton, call on the Deity to avenge His slaughtered "saints," but from such a reference to the main object of the article there is indeed a great distance; this object is distinctly defined as being that of a defensive alliance.



The passage is as follows :—

“ If all Mussulman nations were to form a confederation for the sake of defending themselves against attacks from without, they would acquire power and strength, and be able to overcome all other nations, just as they did in former times. Let all dissension which now separates the different Mussulman nations be put aside; let the nations form a defensive alliance; and, should any power attack any one of the Mussulman nations, let none remain neutral, but let all co-operate in repelling the enemy; let them combine their wealth and property for the support of all—and then no aggressor would have a chance of success. If Prussia had fought single-handed against France, she would have been defeated, and would never have acquired her present glory. Why was she victorious, and how was it that, from being at best only a second-rate Power, she has become one of the great Powers, and how is it that the fame of her mightiness has pervaded all the world? Simply because she had formed a Confederation of all the German States. Mussulman States should follow Prussia's example, and not forget that union gives strength. *We wish to see all Islām united in a defensive alliance only*; no State should interfere with the internal affairs of any other State, and the Confederation should exist only for joint action against an aggressor. Other nations would then not dare to attack, the Mussulman States would be able to protect their liberty, independence, and nationality, and defend their property and country with glory and fame against all aggressors. Now that Islām is not united, protection and defence are impossible, as every State singly is too weak.

“ Whoever aids in this cause will make himself a glorious reputation in both worlds, and his name will be mentioned in the history of Islām till the end of the world, and never be effaced from the pages of time. Is such a Confederation impossible? No, certainly not. We have now shown the result of dissension and that of union, and unless Islām forms a Confederation it will neither be safe from attacks from without nor be able to return to its ancient power and its glory of former days. All intelligent men are advocates of a Mussulman Confederation, and are of our opinion. It is the duty of every true believer to exert himself to the utmost to attain this end; any neglect would ensure terrible and fatal consequences.”

I consider this appeal to be neither unnatural nor impractical; on the contrary, it is one of the best signs of the times. Already at Lahore, Lucknow, and other places, *Sunnis* and *Shiāhs* in India are prepared to sink their differences for the common social and political good of their fellow-Muhammadans; nor does this concession imply any disloyalty to Government. It rather implies the growth of a common citizenship cemented by the same allegiance to the same Empress; and as regards the Muhammadan States unconnected with India, it would indeed be well if they formed an alliance for defensive purposes under the *Ægis* of Great Britain, instead of that of Russia, and the former is now prepared to assume that protectorate.

## II.

“ In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground, for out of it was thou taken; for dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return.”—GEN. iii. 19.

The nature of the ground, to the cultivation of which the first man was addressed, is sufficiently indicated in the verses preceding the above quotation, which describe it as “cursed,” and as yielding “thorns also and thistles,” except what great labour might win from an obdurate soil for the sorrowing worker. This labour might be accompanied by prayer, but it was itself a punishment, and it was reserved to Christianity and to modern civilization to impress that *laborare est orare*.

In Arabic and in the Muhammadan religion, which it is idle to discuss without a knowledge of the sacred language in which it is written, the Biblical passages which we have quoted might be rendered as follows :—

“ IN JIHÁD SHALT THOU EAT BREAD, TILL THOU RETURN TO THE JIHÁDAT ” (stony and sterile soil). As for the remaining part of the quotation, although it is admitted by Muhammadans that we are dust and return unto it, the more common exhortation refers to the breath or living soul which God “breathed into the

nostrils of man," whom He formed of dust, or rather clay. "We belong to God, and unto Him shall we return," is the refrain to numerous verses of the Koran. As for the mortal coil, the Arab was formed of red clay, which is what the word Arab means; and the coasts and bottom of the Red Sea, at the entrance to which he places Eden, and which, according to Professor Haeckel and others, now flows over LIMURIA, the ancient seat of primeval man in his transition from the monkey, who ate the fruits of Paradise where we enjoy cakes, ever attract the notice of the traveller by their red colour. EDOM, or Adam, or Idumea, whence the rugged Mount Sair reddens in the sun from the reflection of the waters, means "red." ADAM, too, was named and formed from *Adama* or "red soil," so that if we are to find our prototype and his lineal descendant, we find him in the *Arab*, whilst if any language can be "the first" in the present cycle of mankind's development during the last 6,000 years, it is Arabic. The reference to the soil and to the sexual relations of most of the words is, at any rate, suggestive of its early historic origin. Their subsequent application to custom, religion, and other motive powers of mankind, is instructive as to the history of the Arabs and that of human thought. But "*Jihād*" is the one word into whose primary meaning sex does *not* enter; it is simply that LABOUR which Muhammadan religion has rendered identical with PRAYER. Nor can we leave this interesting philological inquiry without remarking that, in our opinion, great as are the disciplinary uses of Idio-Germanic studies, the logic and lessons of the Shemitic Branch are unparalleled. We would direct the attention of students of languages to that application of Arabic words with their hundred (in one instance 500) meanings to those groups of associations connected with the life of that people which, once understood, will create Grand Trunk roads through the jungle of its linguistic wealth, and will establish principles which, sublime in their simplicity and sense, will not only enable us to learn with ease the, by far, most difficult of all developed languages, but will also solve many problems in human history and thought, with special reference to the physiology, ethnology, and psychology of the people of the Arabian Peninsula.

We then assert that, like other Arabic roots, *Jihād* has first a concrete and then an applied meaning. This applied meaning varies according to the circumstances of Arabian life and the development of Arabian literature, but never loses its original keynote of "exertion against difficulties." Unlike, however, other Arabic words, it is devoid of sexual reference, and it is thus the purest Arabic word in all its concrete, allegorical, and abstract applications, as it is also the noblest duty of a pious Muhammadan.

*Jihād*, therefore, in the first form of that root, is applied to exertion, and in the third, sixth, and eighth forms to the unsparing exertion in speech or action, or in order to arrive at a correct opinion in spite of difficulties. Thus an examiner in dealing with a candidate and a physician in treating a patient have tasks before them which tax their power; and so has a petitioner who wishes to extract a favour from an official. The general result of these efforts is that *Jahād* is one who is harassed, fatigued, and grieved, and, above all, when a famine befalls the land and the agriculturists are sorely distressed, both their condition and their efforts are "*Jahād*." Indeed, if we are told of a people simply that they are *Jahād*, it means that they are afflicted with drought and dryness of the earth. No doubt, that, similarly, a soldier's fatigue party, the wearied wayfarer, and the jaded beast plied beyond its power of marching, all are aptly described as *Jahād*. To deprive milk of its butter, or to churn it, so as to render it pleasant, or to dilute it with water, the desire of food of a hungry being or eating plentifully of it, whether it be human food or pasture, is *Jihād*. In the third form, which adds the notion of *causation* to that of the original meaning, the object which causes exertion is obviously put into the foreground, and as resistance is greater, so efforts must be increased; therefore, as *Jihād* is really the infinitive of this form, it is equivalent to the Latin *fortia pectora opponere adversis rebus*. These adverse things are generally objects of disapprobation. As with the Christian, the Mussulman has to wage war with "the world, the flesh, and the devil," and so *Jihād* is of three kinds, namely, against a visible enemy, against the devil, and against one's self; and all these three opponents are included in the term *Jihād*, as used in the 22nd Surah of the Koran, 27th verse. Thus to fight an enemy under conditions of great difficulty

and opposition, the enemy doing the same, is *Jihad*, it being remembered that the earliest enemies with whom Muhammadanism had to fight for its very existence were non-Muhammadans desirous of suppressing a hated religion. It was only natural that when reference was made to a "*Jihad* in the path of God" the word should have come to mean a fight in the cause of religion, and that, finally, when the words "in the path of God" were dropped in ordinary conversation, or writing, it should assume the meaning of a "religious war," which it has kept to the present day.

### III.

The other forms of *Jihad* continue the general meaning of the original form as modified by the super-added value of the derived form. Thus, to the labourer it becomes in the fourth form the entering upon land, such as is termed "*Jihad*, a desert, a plain," or "open, barren country," whilst in dealing with affairs that form adds "the necessity of prudence, precaution, and sound judgment." The physical result of this is the old man's hoariness and the appearance of white hair in the dark beard, but exertions steadfastly prosecuted have the effect of both concrete and abstract difficulties being removed, and, therefore, *Ajhad* means that "the earth, the road, or the truth become open to him who takes trouble," and finally *Ajhad* means that "the matter in hand becomes within one's reach."

We now, passing over the sixth form as being very much the same in meaning as the first, approach the eighth, which has had such an importance in the theological Government of the Shah community in which the *Mujtahids* are the scholastic witnesses, commentators, and guides of the faith, whose words, whether it be at Lahore, at Lucknow, or at Teheran, the faithful of the Shiah sect find it impossible to resist. Indeed, the Shah's Government is an absolute Government tempered by the advice or resistance of the *Mujtahid-Ijtihad*; *Mujtahid* as a conventional term, means "a lawyer exerting the faculty of the mind to the utmost for the purpose of forming a right opinion in a case of law respecting a doubtful and difficult point by means of reasoning and comparison," and, similarly, *Ijtihad* means "the referring a case proposed to the judge respecting a doubtful and difficult point from the method of analogy to the Koran and the *Sunnah*." If ever a Mussulman rising were to become formidable among Shiahs, the influence of the *Mujtahids* would have to be conciliated.

The simple noun *jahd* therefore obviously means power, ability, labour, effort, a stringent oath, or else the difficulty, affliction, or fatigue with which the above-named qualities have to contend. Physiologically, of course, disease is *jahd*. The trouble of a large family combined with poverty, or the difficulty of a poor man in paying exorbitant taxes, are all *jahd*. Applied to land *Jihad* has already been explained to be the land in which there is no herbage, or level and rugged land, sterile and ungrateful, though it is also applied to land of which the herbage is much eaten by cattle in the form *jahid*. *Mujhid*, if referred to a friend, shows that he is a sincere and careful adviser; if applied to oneself denotes an embarrassed condition, and if to one's beast, one that is weak by reason of fatigue. The passive participle of *jahd*\* similarly refers to the distressed condition of affairs, of disease, of dearth, or drought; but we think we have said enough to prove that none of the meanings in any of the forms necessarily implies the fighting of a man because he is of a different religion, or the opposition to a non-Muhammadan Government, and that it even does not go so far as the word "Crusade," as animating a com-

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\* *Jihad*, to summarize the ordinary meanings as given by Arabic lexicographers, is simply as follows:—

*Jahd*—to exert oneself, endure fatigue, to become emaciated from disease, to examine, to extract butter from milk, to wish for food, to live in straitened circumstances.

*Jihadat*—the hard ground which has no vegetation.

*Jihad*—war with an enemy.

*Ijhad*—the increase of white hair, the unfolding of truth, exertion, and (in special applications) to divide and to waste property.

munity in an attempt to oust the unbeliever from foreign land in order to obtain the guardianship of the Holy Sepulchre, or to simply wrest land from the Muhammadans for the glory of a most Christian King.

IV.

When some people applied to Muhammad for permission to join in a holy war against those who were oppressing Muhammadans, he replied to them, "Your true *Jihād* is in endeavouring to serve your parents." The Koran when using the word "*Jihād*" seems preferentially to use it for war with sin—"whoever wages *Jihād* in morality we will show him the true way." Elsewhere, the Koran exhorts us to fight infidels with the "great *Jihād*," the sword of the spirit and the arguments of the Muhammadan Bible. In the traditions regarding the sayings and doings of the prophet, a band of holy warriors is returning cheerfully from a victorious war with infidels to the peace of their homes and the tranquil observation of their faith. In passing the prophet they exclaim: "We have returned from the small *Jihād*, the war with aggressors on the Muhammadan faith, to the great *Jihād*, the war with sin." Christians should similarly, as representatives of the Church of Universal Brotherhood, which yet is called the Church Militant, and which has as often wielded the secular sword as it has that of the spirit, act on the words alike of St. John and of the ancient Arabic proverb, "Take what is pure and leave what is impure," even from religious opponents. *Pas est et ab hoste docere*, and although we are in a world in which, as another Arab proverb has it, "one *Attār*" (originally a seller of the *atar* or Otto = essence of roses) "is of little use in an age of corruption," we may yet hope that some reader may address himself to the important subject of *Jihād* without the preconceptions which have hitherto prevented its investigation.

The principal references in the Koran relating to religious war are found in the following *Suras* or chapters:—

No violence is to be used in religious matters, although the popular impression is that this is the very essence of Muhammadanism. The second chapter of the Koran distinctly lays down, "Let there be no violence in religion." This passage was particularly directed to some of Muhammad's first proselytes, who having sons that had been brought up in idolatry or Judaism, wished to compel them to embrace Muhammadanism. Indeed, even when the mothers of non-Muhammadan children wanted to take them away from their believing relatives, Muhammad prevented every attempt to retain them. The second chapter similarly says, "Surely those who believe" (*viz.*, Muhammadans) "and those who Judaize, and Christians and Sabæans, whoever believeth in God, in the last day, and doeth that which is right, they shall have their reward of their Lord." These words are repeated in the fifth chapter, and, no doubt, several Muhammadan doctors consider it to be the doctrine of their Prophet that every man may be saved in his own religion, provided he be sincere and lead a good life; however, under the pressure of the followers of Muhammad this latitude was curtailed and was explained to mean "if he became a Moslem"—though this explanation is manifestly a faulty one, because if an idolater became a Moslem he would be equally saved, and so there would be no difference between him and an "Ahl-Kitab," or possessor of a (sacred) book, namely, a Christian or a Jew. In Acts x. 35 the Apostle Peter similarly states that "in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him," and yet we do not infer from this that any religion is sufficient to save without faith in Christ. The fact is that there is an essential difference between the *Suras* delivered at Mecca and those delivered at Medina. In the first case, we have the utterances of one who, as a true Prophet, calls people to repentance and to a godly life apart from worldly considerations. In the chapters, however, given at Medina, we necessarily find these worldly considerations paramount, Muhammadanism struggling for its very existence, and being confronted, not only with the necessity of legislation among its own followers, but also with the organization of war, and with the circumstances that give rise to it or the results that follow from it; so that it is obvious that instructions given to warriors or in a code of legislation must differ from appeals to salvation. It is only in bearing in mind the circumstances

under which each particular instruction was given that we can come to a right conclusion as to whether war with infidels, as such, is legitimate or not. We have no hesitation in stating that an unbiassed study of the Muhammadan scriptures will lead one to the conclusion that all those who believe in God and act righteously, will be saved. Indeed, the ground is cut off from under the feet of those people who maintain that *Jihad* is intended to propagate the Muhammadan religion by means of the sword. It is, on the contrary, distinctly laid down in the *Sura* called "Pilgrimage," that the object of *Jihad* is to protect mosques, churches, synagogues, and monasteries from destruction, and we have yet to learn the name of the Christian crusader whose object it was to protect mosques or synagogues. Of course, when the Arabs were driven from Spain, to which they had brought their industry and learning, by Ferdinand and Isabella, and were driven into opposition to Christians, the modern meaning of *Jihad* as hostility to Christianity was naturally accentuated. Indeed, *Jihad* is so essentially an EFFORT for the protection of Muhammadanism against assault, that the Muhammadan generals were distinctly commanded not to attack any place in which the Muhammadan call to prayer could be performed or in which a single Muhammadan could live unmolested as a witness to the faith.

Fighting for religion is, indeed, encouraged in the second chapter, which was given under circumstances of great provocation, but even in that it is distinctly laid down, "and fight for the religion of God against those that fight against you, but transgress not by attacking them first, for God loveth not the transgressors; kill them wherever you find them, and turn them out of that whereof they have dispossessed you, for temptation to idolatry is more grievous than slaughter; yet fight not against them in the holy temple until they attack you therein, and if they attack you, slay them, but if they desist, God is gracious and merciful; fight therefore against them until there be no temptation to idolatry and the religion be God's, but if they desist, then let there be no hostility except against the ungodly"—in other words: fight sin but not the sinner in times of peace. Again, in the third chapter, when the Lord of Hosts is invoked as being more powerful than all the confronting armies of enemies, when the Koreish endeavoured to induce the Muhammadans to return to their old idolatry as they fled in the battle of *Ohâ*, the encouragement to fight given in that chapter has, of course, only special application: "How many prophets have encountered foes who had myriads of troops, and yet they desponded not in their mind for what had befallen them in fighting for the religion of God, and were not weakened (in their belief), neither behaved themselves in an abject manner. . . . God gave them the reward of this world and a glorious reward in the life to come;" and again, "we will surely cast a dread into the hearts of the unbelievers," in allusion to the Koreish repenting that they had not utterly extirpated the Muhammadans, and to their beginning to think of going back to Medina for that purpose, but being prevented by a sudden panic which fell from God.

Again, in the fourth chapter, "Fight therefore for the religion of God, and oblige not any one to do what is difficult except thyself." This is in allusion to the Muhammadans refusing to follow their prophet to the lesser expedition of Bedr, so that he was obliged to set out with no more than seventy men. In other words, the prophet only was under the obligation of obeying God's commands, however difficult. "However excite the faithful to war, perhaps God will restrain the courage of the unbelievers, for God is stronger than they and more able to punish. *He who intercedeth between men with a good intercession shall have a portion thereof;*" and further on, "When you are saluted with a salutation, salute the person with a better salutation," in other words, when the purely Muhammadan salutation of *Salam aleikum* is given by a Muhammadan, the reply should be the same with the addition, "and the mercy of God and His blessing." Again, in the eighth chapter, "All true believers! when you meet the unbelievers marching in great numbers against you turn not your backs on to them, for whoso shall turn his back on to them in that day, unless he turn aside to fight or retreateth to another party of the faithful, shall draw on himself the indignation of God." The fact was that on the occasion when the injunction was given, Muhammadans could not avoid fighting, and there was therefore a necessity for a special strong appeal; but *Jihad*,

even when explained as a righteous effort of waging war in self-defence against the grossest outrage on one's religion, is strictly limited in the passage to which we have already alluded and which we now quote *in extenso* :—

· Koran Surā, entitled "The Pilgrimage"—Al Hajj.

"Permission is granted unto those who take arms against the unbelievers, *because* they have been unjustly persecuted by them and have been turned out of their habitations injuriously and *for no other reason than because they say 'Our Lord is God.'* And if God did not repel the violence of some men by others, VERILY MONASTERIES AND CHURCHES AND SYNAGOGUES AND MOSQUES, WHEREIN THE NAME OF GOD IS FREQUENTLY COMMEMORATED, WOULD BE UTTERLY DEMOLISHED."

G. W. LEITNER.

*Asiatic Quarterly Review* of October 1886.

## APPENDIX VI.

### THE REVIVAL OF MUHAMMADAN LEARNING.

(From *The Bombay Gazette Summary* of May 3rd, 1889.)

THE Nawáb Imád Nawáz Jang (a well-known Hyderabad nobleman), has addressed the following letter to Dr. Leitner :—

HANAMOUND, KHAMMAM DISTRICT, HYDERABAD, DECCAN, 8th January, 1889.

DEAR SIR,—I have much pleasure in acknowledging the receipt of your letter of November 16th, 1888, and, as a Muhammadan, I have to offer you my warmest thanks for the sympathy therein expressed towards my co-religionists.

I need hardly remark that education throughout the Muhammadan world is at present in a deplorably backward condition. For this several reasons may be assigned, one of the principal ones being, in my opinion, the following. Treatises on the various sciences and arts that were cultivated in former times by Muhammadans are now extant, but they are chiefly in the Arabic language, while the Muhammadans who speak that tongue form but a small proportion of the total Mussulman population of the world. The main languages in use among the Muhammadans, besides Arabic, are Urdu, Persian, and Turkish.

The works that exist in Arabic on the ancient sciences and arts have not yet been all translated into these languages, nor have they been enriched with translations from European languages of works on modern sciences and arts. Original works, such as would be considered requisite for the purposes of a complete system of national Muhammadan education in all its branches, have not yet been produced in them. These languages, I mean those of the Muslim world, save Arabic, can only boast of a limited number of works on Literature and Theology. The cultivation of the Arabic language itself began to decline in 656 A. H., after the fall of the Abbaside Caliphs, the reign of one of whom (Almamun) may be considered the Augustan period of Arabian literature, arts, and sciences. The attempts that have recently been made to produce translations and original works in that language do not appear as yet to have been crowned with any high degree of success.

In the present state of Muhammadan education it is not difficult to conceive why the total number of Muhammadans who can understand Arabic, which is the language of their sacred writings, is exceedingly small. Perhaps I may not be wrong in remarking that in India, where the Muhammadans number nearly six crores (sixty millions), there are not even ten thousand amongst them who can rightly comprehend the meaning of the Koran in the original, while the rest of them recite passages from it during their prayers which they have learnt by

rote, generally without understanding their meaning. The system of teaching Arabic in India is so defective that many of the Ulama (or "the learned") who go through a course of study in that language, extending over several years, can barely speak or write in it. Many of the works which have been translated from Arabic into Urdu, Persian, Turkish, will, when compared with the original, be found to differ from them in several material respects. Although in no Muhammadan country does there exist a proper system of compulsory or national education, yet the majority of the Mussulmans in those countries and elsewhere know their religious tenets and understand the various details of their prayers and ceremonies, which are simple enough; such of them as have read Arabic cannot, however, understand several passages in the Koran, without the aid of commentaries, and no Muhammadan can offer prayers to God or perform the ordinary rites without acquainting himself with the rules of Fikha, the religious Law (as laid down by Commentators and Jurists). As a rule, Muhammadans adhere to Fikha, which lays down ordinances as to what we should do and what we should avoid doing. There are many disputed points in Fikha, but in regard to these we abide by Fatwas (or "rulings" by eminent leaders in the Faith). Fikha apart there are innumerable difficult questions connected with Islam which one should comprehend before expressing an opinion on the subject. It is a matter for surprise to us to find that many Europeans, possessing the intelligence they do, come to the conclusion that they have mastered the intricacies of Islam if they have simply read such inaccurate translations of the Koran as Sale has produced, or have merely perused an article or two in a journal on Islam. Among Europeans there are some who have not taken the trouble to inquire for themselves what Islam is, but have formed their opinion about it from what they have heard from others in course of conversation. There are some who, having found a Muhammadan king or ruler practise oppression, or having read tales of cruelties of Muhammadans in historical works, are led to think that all this is what Islam dictates. Some have formed their opinion about Islam from a perusal of some book written by a prejudiced European solely on its demerits, or have in the course of their studies come across a repealed command or a disputed point connected with our religion. All such men have fallen into error in consequence of their not having found wherein the error lies. But those Europeans who, being profound Arabic scholars, and bringing to bear on the subject a mind impartial and free from prejudice, have read the Koran with the aid of commentaries, and have had sufficient material before them to distinguish those points on which Fatwas exist, from those on which there are none, have always written respectfully of Islam. The names of such distinguished and liberal-minded scholars are too well known to be mentioned here. While various united attempts are being made in Europe for the advancement of knowledge, no united efforts have ever been made there to inquire into the real nature of Islam. There has never yet assembled in any part of Europe to discuss this question, a Conference consisting of such unprejudiced European scholars of Arabic as have well read the Koran and other works which are necessary for its proper comprehension, and also of such Muhammadan gentlemen as are acquainted with European sciences and arts, and the real nature of Christianity. Individual Christians have, no doubt, pronounced their one-sided opinion about Islam. Among them there are some who are in favour of it, while others are against it.

In this brief letter I cannot discuss the various questions connected with Islam, or explain various merits which, in an ethical point of view, it possesses, or explain away the objections of its assailants. Even if I could do so it would produce little effect on the public.

I am desirous that a movement should be set on foot for having a network of Associations to enquire into the real nature of Islam, which will be the means of drawing the attention of the public to this question and of affording an opportunity to competent persons to express their individual views thereon. Such Associations should be established in various countries of the globe. If this idea were ever realized, it would be the first of its kind so far as the Muhammadan religion is concerned. Perhaps the first Association of this description may

spring up in London, which abounds in learned, unprejudiced, and liberal-minded men. I am certain that if an Association on the lines I have indicated above be established, the ill-feeling which now exists between Muhammadans and Christians will, ere long, disappear, and they will understand what good their respective religions possess. If suitable arrangements be made, many Muhammadans and Christians who are desirous of seeking the truth, will be very glad to take part in this movement. The funds needed for defraying the expenses incidental to the management of such Associations could, of course, be raised by subscriptions and donations. A portion of the fund so raised may be set apart for creating an agency for contributing articles to journals, and for delivering lectures in furtherance of the objects of the Association, and whenever practical branch associations may be established in cities or towns. Although at first this idea seems one likely to be attended with practical difficulties, yet, if such a movement were once set on foot, no obstacles would arise in the way of working out the scheme in its entirety. I am inclined to think that many of the learned Societies that now exist in various parts of the world will be glad to further our aims and to manifest their sympathy with our cause.

I am, with best wishes, yours sincerely,

IMÁD NAWÁZ JANG.

G. W. LEITNER, ESQ., LL.D., PH.D.,  
ORIENTAL INSTITUTE, WOKING, ENGLAND.

Dr. Leitner writes as follows to the Editor of *Diplomatic Flysheets* on the above letter :—

SAN SEBASTIAN, 6th March, 1889.

SIR,—In the present state of my health I can do little more than correct the proof of the admirable letter of Nawab Imad Nawaz Jang, and express my hearty general concurrence in its views. A Conference for discussing the sister faiths of Christianity and Islam, composed of scholars such as he proposes, would, no doubt, remove many misconceptions that now exist, and would pave the way to a better understanding between Christians and Muhammadans. The translation of important Arabic works on theology and law would also be of importance, and the Nawab has already given effect to his views by offering a prize for a translation into English of a famous commentary on the Koran, the Tafsir-ul-Jalalein. His suggestion for better and more widely-spread instruction in Arabic among Muhammadans of all countries is of the greatest importance if the religious and literary life of Muhammadans is to be preserved, for in Arabic are treasures of thought and of facts which are unparalleled, and which enrich not only Muhammadan culture, but also that of the world. The study of that language, which is connected with all the best historical and other Associations of Muhammadans, offers the desired link among them and forms a basis for the mental discipline which alone renders the connection between ancient civilization and modern requirements beneficial and truly progressive, because developed from within an indigenous source. My official report on "Indigenous Education" shows that in the Panjab alone more than ten thousand know Arabic (though not so profoundly as the Nawab would wish), whilst the 9½ millions of Muhammadans in that province are more affected for good in their daily lives through a knowledge of their religious duties, more or less inspired by Arabian thought, than a similar number of Christians in any country are affected by a knowledge of their own sacred writings, whether in Hebrew, Greek, or Latin, or (for that matter) in their own vernacular language. The translation also of European works of merit into the various spoken languages of Muhammadans is certainly a matter in which the Asiatic Societies of Europe, especially that in England, should help, and a beginning might be made by the publication of a series of scientific subjects and standard Muhammadan authors, in Arabic, Urdu, Persian, and Turkish, such as the French have brought out for themselves in the "*Cent bons livres*" at the cost



of one penny for each of the hundred small volumes. I need hardly add that in any such efforts and towards the working of an Anglo-Muhammadan conference or Association in England, my services, such as they can be at my age and state of health are, if desired, at the service of a cause which will promote alike learning and goodwill among men.

As for the article on "Moslem Fanaticism" in *Colburn's United Service Magazine*, you cannot answer its half-truths or coloured side-lights better than by the republication of the article on "Jihad" in the *Asiatic Quarterly Review*, which shows that Muhammadans can only engage in a "holy war," or rather "effort," if they are persecuted *because* they are Muhammadans, the object of a "Jihad" being "the *protection* of mosques, churches, and synagogues in which the name of the Only God is preached" (see chapter on the "Pilgrimage" in the Koran). I agree, however, with the writer that "Muhammadans in general are aware of their educational disadvantages," although in their desire to acquire modern "instruction" in the race for worldly advantages, they should not neglect what will alone render that instruction profitable to them, namely, that true "education," which they already possess in their noble religious associations, when correctly understood, and in that noblest of all languages—the classical and yet still spoken Arabic.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

G. W. LEITNER.

## TEUTONIC HEATHENDOM.

BY F. YORK POWELL, M.A.

*Now God be praised that to believing Souls,  
Gives Light in Darkness, Comfort in Despair.*  
2 HEN. VI. 11. 1.

It can hardly be denied that there is an enduring interest in the subject of this lecture. No one who cares for the history of the thought of our race but must feel an interest in tracing back to their springs the courses of such mighty rivers. But this voyage of discovery is a difficult one. The way becomes darker and darker, and difficulties crowd around as one nears these sources.

The material existing includes, first, *written evidence*, which, apart from the notices preserved by Tacitus, Dio, Velleius, Florus, the Augustan Historians, Marcellinus, and other classical authors, consists mainly of exact and excellent accounts of heathen ways and customs, preserved by an Icelandic priest named Are, born in 1067, who took a great interest in the antiquities of his race, and wrote books (c. 1100-25), in which are preserved a number of most curious traditions.

Then there is an old collection of songs, the so-called *Older Edda*, which, it is believed, was compiled in the twelfth century, in the Orkney or Shetland Islands, by some Iclander who retained an interest in the old heathen Lays which but for him had died out of memory. He has preserved some thirty fragmentary poems. The *Younger Edda*, really a gradus or poetic dictionary, was compiled by Snorre Sturlason, 1178—1241, the Icelandic historian, and other scholars and poets for the benefit of those who intended to compose verse, for the Icelandic poets (like our own poets of last century) even after the acceptance of Christianity were accustomed to make allusions to the old gods of a past mythology.

Next comes the Latin *Historia Danica* of Saxo the monk of Lund, who not only wrote a good history of his own time, but out of old songs and traditions—many furnished to him by Icelanders, and persons familiar with other of the western Scandinavian colonies—put together a curious account of the mythic days

of Denmark, working after the fashion of our Geoffrey of Monmouth.<sup>1</sup>

Besides these main authorities there are a vast number of valuable little stories, hints and allusions to heathen habits and beliefs, scattered through the vast mediæval literature of England, France and Germany. These have been for the most part collected and arranged in his masterly and delightful way by Jacob Grimm in his *Teutonic Mythology*, now accessible to all in Mr. Stallybrass's excellent and accurate translation. This book may be supplemented by M. Rydberg's study of parts of Saxo, entitled *Teutonic Mythology*, and translated by Rasmus B. Anderson (Swan Sonnenschein & Co.: 1889).

Jacob Grimm and his brother William also set the example of collecting and using *oral evidence*, fairy tales and folk lore of all kinds, which still linger upon the lips of the people in country-places, as material for the history of mythology and thought of the past. Much has been done by Germans, Icelanders, Scandinavians, and something by such Englishmen as Halliwell and Campbell, to work this great mine of popular tradition; and recent scholars, especially Mr. A. Lang, have shown the use to which it can be put in elucidating some of the more important problems of the history of man's past.

Such being, roughly, our materials, how are we to study them? What trains of thought may be most profitably followed? First of all, it must be acknowledged—that it is useless to attempt to solve the problem by one key, to explain the religion of the past by one principle.

Our early Teuton forefathers were influenced by *anthropomorphism*, and *animism*, and thought that inanimate objects, as stones, stars, the elements, and organisms such as trees, fishes, birds, and beasts were possessed of spirits akin to their own; they believed in *dreams*, and used them largely as a means of foretelling the future; they *worshipped the dead* and treated their deceased ancestors as gods; they held the *doctrine of correspondences*, i.e. that things which had a superficial likeness had a deeper resemblance—from which last doctrine there grew up some of the earlier systems of medicine: while the *wizard*, with his use of hypnotism, mania, poison, jugglery, and medicine, was dreaded and sometimes punished. In fact, there

<sup>1</sup> The chief works of Are, *Landnámabók* (The Book of Settlements), *Libellus Islandorum*, and the *Story of the Conversion of Iceland*, have been edited and translated by Dr. Vigfusson and myself, and will shortly appear. The *Elder Edda* poems have been edited and translated by the same in *Corpus Poeticum Boreale* (Oxford: 1888). The first two parts of the prose or *Younger Edda* have been translated into English, by Sir G. Dasent, and others. Are's *Ynglinga-tal* is translated by Laing from a Danish version in his *Sea-kings of Norway*.

is hardly a superstitious use or observance, which a modern missionary may note in the barbarous Central African or South American, or Polynesian tribe he is endeavouring to civilize and raise, but we may find its analogue among the practices or beliefs of our Teutonic forefathers. These things are a part of the general history of mankind, they make up a mental stage through which progressive nations pass—a stage of false but shrewd reasoning, of clever but mistaken guesses, of erroneous but plausible conclusions, a stage such as individually we all go through in infancy and childhood. Our minds are of little better quality than our ancestors', but we profit by the vast mass of accepted, tested, and recorded information which they had not. We start higher up the ladder, and consequently ought to get a little higher on the climb to knowledge.

Again, it is important that we should at once throw aside the idea that there was any *system*, any organized pantheon, in the religion of these peoples. Their tribes were small and isolated, and each had its own peculiar gods and observances, although the mould of each faith was somewhat similar. Hence there were varieties of religious customs among the Goths, Swedes, Saxons, and Angles. The same thing was the case in ancient Greece, and it must occur in all civilizations at the stage before small clans and tribes have combined into great leagues and centralized nations. Hence we shall find many parallel versions of leading myths, many alternative forms of the same tale, many widespread legends attributed to different persons in different places. Then, too, one perceives that round the actual living flesh-and-blood hero of the day the stories of former heroes crystallize. Thus the stories related about King Arthur once belonged to earlier heroes—Gwyn and others; precisely as I was once told by a friend that in a country-part of Italy he had heard a story of Garibaldi, which has been referred for many hundreds of years to an old Semitic hero. Garibaldi was in the hills with a small band of men, pursued closely by the cruel Whitecoats. The fugitives had been marching hour after hour in the burning sun without a drop of water; it was high noon, and in the agony of thirst several of the General's little band threw themselves down on the ground declaring they could go no farther. Garibaldi ordered a little mountain gun he had to be brought up. This gun he aimed himself at a conspicuous cliff, not far off, and fired. Scarcely had the smoke of the gun passed away when a glittering thread of water was seen trickling from the rock precisely where the shot had smitten it. The thirsty Redshirts drank their fill, marched on refreshed, and escaped their foes. In the light of this story it is easy to see how upon Theodric the famous East

Gothic king, there descended legends which belonged to an earlier and divine Theodric, as Professor Rhys has pointed out; how upon Beowulf the Jute, and upon Sigfredos-Arminius the Cheruscan, there have fastened tales of dragon-slaying which belonged to more mythical heroes.

With such preliminary note, one may proceed to touch on some of the beliefs of the heathen Teuton world. With regard to *cosmogony* three or four different opinions have reached us, the oldest being, as we should suppose, extremely childish. It was that originally there was nothing but a huge giant, who nearly filled all space. Some heroic persons killed the giant, and from his body they made the world, sun, moon, etc. At first this was firmly believed in, then doubted, and afterwards told to children as a fairy tale. It is, of course, common among Aryan nations.

There were also tales of the earth-goddess and the sky-god, of the god of day, of the sun-goddess and the moon-god, often very like those in other mythologies. Then, there was a tale of the first man and woman, being made by the gods out of two trees, ash and elder, that grew on the seashore. Kings and heroes were always supposed to be the actual descendants of the gods, and became gods themselves when they died.

The world was looked upon as a huge plain, a belief which existed in Greece and other countries. Man lived near the edge of this earth-plain, outside was the ocean-stream, as in Homer's cosmogony. Beyond this again was a belt of frozen land, the boundaries of which were indefinite, where dwelt giants and demons.

All the *primitive arts and culture* came from the underworld won by the clever tricks and devices of heroes. Swans and bees came from a paradise, somewhere underground, where the Fates lived. Sheep and oxen were also believed to be gifts from the underworld. Man obtained *inspiration* by some hero stealing from the giants or dwarfs a certain potent liquid, which gave to him that quaffed it the power of poetry, prophecy, and memory. As to the origin of *fire*, Woden was the Prometheus of the Teutonic race, as Heimdal was its culture-god and Sheaf its Triptolemos, the hero who taught men to sow corn and make bread. Frey and Tew were the chief gods of the Swedes and Franks, Thunder (Thór) of the Reams and Throwends in West Norway. Eager was the sea-god and Ran his wife, Rode the wind-god, and Loke the evil-plotting giant who brings trouble among gods and men.

All *natural phenomena* were ascribed to the agency of the gods or demons, thunder and bad weather were the work of spirits; frost and cold were the work of giants and much to be feared. Thunder was looked upon as a beneficent god—killing demons,

bringing back the sunlight and fructifying rain. Pearls and amber were the tears of goddesses.<sup>1</sup>

These beliefs were childish; but their explanations were the beginning of science. They only differ from many of our hypotheses in their greater ambition and simplicity. We are content nowadays to try and make out the *how* without trying to explain the *why*.

As to *ritual*, animal and human sacrifices were offered. The latter, nevertheless, were always regarded with a kind of horror and awe. A great temple was a kind of treasury, storehouse, and meeting-place. Once or twice a year there were great sacrifices of cattle, persons were sprinkled with the blood, auguries were taken, and afterwards the sacrificed beasts formed the material for feasts. They had village feasts, holiday feasts, Easter feasts welcoming the Summer; Midsummer and Christmas feasts.

The Teutons—differing in this from the Western Præ-Celtic race, and those Celts who had adapted their customs and beliefs—do not seem to have had a regular priesthood, though special persons were, by hereditary right, charged with the service of certain shrines.

The greatest fanes we know of were situated at the headquarters of the great tribes, or tribal leagues; thus at Upsala (the High-Hall) in Sweden, the cult of Yngwe-Frey flourished; at his grave-mound were a temple, a treasury, a sacrificial place, and an oracle where folks sought, by various kinds of divination, to gain from the god a morsel of his prescience. In England the word Harrow marks a heathen "high place." There was always a temple at the place where the High Court of Parliament or Folk-moot of a tribe was held, and the courtfield was hallowed, and order kept there by the hereditary priests of the place (chaplains of these earliest Houses of Lords and Commons). Heligoland, that tiny North Sea island, now famous only as a station for "bird-men," and a watering-place for north-west Germany, was once a famous fane and sanctuary.

In the temples no weapon could be worn, no unhallowed act performed, under penalty of the god's high displeasure, as we learn from Bede's story of the converted heathen priest, Coifi (Coibhe), who, mounted on a horse and fully armed, rode into the sacred temple-enclosure and hurled his spear in defiance of the god to which the temple belonged, at Godmundingham, hard by York.

With regard to *death* and the *future life*, there were two pretty distinct sets of ideas. The older seems to have been that at

<sup>1</sup> It is probable from a curious story in the *Kalevala* that the nodules of white flint in the white chalk were looked on among the earlier Fins as the clotted, hardened milk of some spiritual being.

death man's spirit dwelt in the grave where his body lay. The grave-mounds were the resting-places of the dead who inhabited them, just as the living inhabit houses. With the deceased were always buried those things which it was thought would be useful to him in his spirit life.

No one was supposed to die naturally ; it was alway some spirit, such as Weird or Fate, or the War-goddess, or the Fever-spirit, or some demon sent by witchcraft, which destroyed a man, and then Death, a kind of psychopomp (like Hermeias in ancient Greece, or Charon in modern Greece), led his spirit away.

Again, there was a belief that at death man took a long journey and plunged into a great abyss, where dwelt a black goddess, from whom the name of Hell in a later religious system is obtained. If the departed were clever enough to elude the demons there, they passed on into a happier sphere. This is, in some of its later forms, a kind of heathen reflex of the Christian idea.

Some of the Teutons seem (in the ninth century, at least) to have believed in the transmigration of souls, in a dead hero being born again in his descendant. Hence, when Hakon the Good—our Athelstane's foster-son—came back to Norway, men said : "It is Harold Fairhair come again !" And the soul of Helge the Good was—according to a fine tenth-century poem—twice re-incarnated in heroes named Helge.

As to punishment after death, as early as the eighth century, there was a widespread belief that evildoers, perjurers, murderers, persons of foul life, and traitors, would meet a fit recompense in the next world ; and Christians in England, and Germany, and Scandinavia, and France, throughout the Middle Ages, had their ideas of judgment and the next world deeply coloured by these old heathen beliefs. But, till the infiltration of Christian ideas, in the ninth century, they had not arrived at any idea of a great day of doom.

The elaborate Walhalla *pantheon* found in the later *Edda* was put together by scholars after the heathen days, and the *eschatology*, with its Ragnarok, is largely drawn from one poem, the Sybil's Prophecy, which bears evident traces of Christian influence.

One of the most important of early Teutonic institutions, but one which we can only reconstruct by piecing together bits of scattered fact, was the *clan* or *totem* system—an institution very widespread and very important in the early history of many races, both of the Old and New Worlds. The pattern of nomenclature among the Teutons seems to point to this system being in full vigour down to pretty recent times. But it fell rapidly before the economic and social changes, brought about by an altered

mode of life, and by the change of thought consequent upon contact with Christianity. The members of a clan could not, originally, intermarry; they traced descent originally through the mother; they bore the name of their eponym, or ancestor, as part of their own name; and, no doubt, they had certain common legal rights, and performed certain religious rites, in common. The wolf, the bear, the horse, the war-goddess, the chief god of the tribe under many epithets, the rock, the spear, the home-land, the day, the sun, the shrine, are the chief eponyms used by the early Teutons. The Athelings, who ruled South England in the ninth and tenth centuries, the Gothic Amalings and Balthings, the Choruscan Sigelings, are examples of famous royal clans.

Witchcraft, of a type resembling that of the Obi or Voodoo *black-magic* cult, was met with among the early Teutons, and was to them, even as heathens, a thing hateful and horrible, loathsome to gods and men; though seers, and weather-prophets, soothsayers and men of second sight, augurs and dream-readers, were revered and treated as specially favoured by the gods, who gave them part of their own knowledge; and *white magic* was often appealed to, to frustrate the wicked assaults of witches and wizards.

Turning from ritual and the creed of Teutonic heathendom to its ethical system an immense superiority is manifest. There were no "Ten Commandments," but good manners and morals were taught in songs, and given to the young in the form of story. One old poetic Dialogue between Father and Son contains many precepts—as, how to behave as a guest, friend, and householder, and much wisdom in the form of proverbs. The first virtue is bravery, the next is manliness. Uprightness of life, cleanness of living, were enforced. Sincerity and generosity were directed. Silence was a virtue. Reverence was much enjoined, and, indeed, no people can advance far without a high regard being paid to this virtue. Reverence was paid, not only to the gods but to those things that were worthy of reverence; respect must be paid to family life, the political organization, to the king, to the aged, to women and children. There was also a high ideal of duty to kindred, lord, and comrade, and among the free classes a high standard of self-respect.

Alongside of these excellent principles there were great shortcomings—harshness, deceit, and cruelty towards all who were not kinsfolk or friends (for only these were considered as within the ethical circle, all the rest of the world was outside with the animals), pride and self-complacency, false ideas of honour, weakness in face of superstitious fears, though we find noble examples in which men, of their own truth and sweetness of nature, refused



and scorned sins which those around them commended and committed.

With such good ethical principles, and such poor creed and ritual, it is not to be wondered that the heathen beliefs and faith went down before Christianity without any compulsion, and that in England and Scandinavia Christianity was accepted willingly and readily by king and people.

There were many gains accruing from the adoption of the new system. First, kindness was enforced instead of brutality to slaves, paupers, and persons not of their own family. Next, there was greater truthfulness and stricter keeping of covenants, which rendered progress possible. Third, the importance of self-sacrifice to duty was more decidedly enjoined. Fourth, the cruel terrors and foul superstitions connected with witchcraft were lessened. Fifth, the greater simplicity and reasonableness of the New Faith opened the way to further progress in thought. Last, the New Faith brought its Teutonic votaries into touch with other European nations, with anterior civilizations, and with a certain amount of knowledge won from nature by wise men in the past.

After this brief and necessarily imperfect sketch of a great subject—every paragraph in which might be illustrated by numerous examples and instances, and sustained by lengthy argument and copious exposition—it may be well to conclude by giving a faithful and plain version of a poem composed in the last days of Teutonic heathendom by a warrior and poet, named Egil, who had served our own King Athelstan, had wandered over many northern lands and seas, and settled down at last, after all his chequered career abroad, in his father's house in the new colony of Iceland, looking for peace. But he met with a series of misfortunes in his old age; and, worst of all, there befell the death of his two elder and best beloved sons. The first, Gunnere, died of fever; the second was drowned. It is told that when the news of the last calamity reached him that Egil rode to the shore to seek his son's body, and came right upon it, and took it up and set it across his knees, and rode with it to the grave of his own father. Then he had the grave opened, and laid his son therein by the side of his grandfather. And the grave was not closed again till about sunset. Then Egil rode straight home and went in and shut himself up in his own room and lay down. There he stayed, speechless and neither eating nor drinking all that night and next day, and no one dared to speak to him or reason with him. But on the third morning his wife sent off a man on horseback to fetch Thorberg, his favourite daughter, who was living some way off with her husband. She at once started for her father's house, and rode all that evening and through the night without halting till

she reached it. Then she alighted, and went into the hall. Her mother greeted her: "Have ye eaten by the way?" Says Thorberg: "I have taken neither bit nor sup, nor will I till I sup with Woden's wife [the goddess]; I will follow my father and brother." Then she went to her father's door and cried: "Come father; for I wish us both to go the same way!" And Egil opened the door to her, saying: "Thou hast done well, daughter, to wish to die with thy father. Is it likely I could live after such sorrow?" But Thorberg did this that she might by some stratagem get her father to break his fast and live, and this she cunningly brought about, and then said: "Now our plan of starving is over, and perhaps it is better, for I should like us to live a little longer, father, that thou mightest make a dirge over thy son. For there is no one else that could do so fitly." And Egil said he would try to do as she wished. And as he made the dirge he grew better, and when it was finished he rose up and recited it to his wife and daughter and kinsfolk, and then sat down in his seat and ate and drank and held the funeral feast over his son in heathen fashion. And he sent his daughter home again with costly gifts and much love. And this is the dirge, and it is called

## THE SONS' WRECK.

It is hard for me to raise my tongue,  
the steel-yard of sound, within my mouth;  
Little hope have I of winning Wodin's spoil [poesy]  
nor is it lightly drawn from the hiding-places of my mind,

\* \* \* \* \*

The heaviness of my woe is the cause thereof.

\* \* \* \* \*

For my race hath come down to the stock  
like the burnt trunk of the trees in the forest!  
No hearty man is he that must bear in his arms  
the corse of his kinsman from his house!

First I will with my song-blade [tongue]  
hew this matter out in the hall of memories [my breast]:  
Yea, this verse-timber, leafed with speech,  
shall pass out of the word-fane [my mouth].

Cruel was the breach the billow made  
in my father's fence of kinsmen!  
I can see it standing unfilled and unclosed,  
the gap, left by my son, which the Sea caused me!

Ran [the ocean-giantess] hath handled me very roughly  
I am utterly reft of my loving friends:  
The Sea hath cut the bonds of my race  
its hard-spun strands that lay about me.

How shall I take up my cause with the sword  
against the Brewer of all the Gods [the Sea God]?  
How shall I make war upon the awful Maids of the Storm [billows]  
or fight a wager of battle with the wife of Eager [the Sea God]?

Moreover I know that I am not strong enough  
to cope with the slayer of my sons,  
for manifest to the eyes of all the people  
is the helplessness of me, an old man !

The Ocean hath spoiled me sorely :  
it is a hard thing to tell over the slaughter of kinsfolk !

\* \* \* \*

The second matter of my Song shall be  
how the Friend of the Gauts [Woden] raised up to Godham  
the Sapling of my race [Gunnere], that sprung from me,  
the tendril of the kin of my wife.

\* \* \* \*

Yea, he is gone to be a guest at the city of the Hive [Paradise]

\* \* \* \*

I know very well that in my son .  
was the making of a goodly gentleman .  
if that fruitful branch had been left to ripen  
ere the Lord of Hosts [Woden] laid hands on him.

He ever held fast to his father's word  
though the whole congregation spake against it .  
and upheld my cause at Wal-rock [the Moot-hill]  
and was the greatest stay to my strength.

There cometh often longing into my mind  
for the brotherhood of Arnbeorn [the best friend of his youth] .  
reft of my friends, when the battle is waxing high,  
that bold baron, I think on him !

What other man that loves me well  
will stand by my side against my foes' counsels ?

I often lack *the strong pinnons that upheld me*.  
I go with drooping flight for my friends are dropping away.  
It is right hard to find a man to trust  
among all the congregation beneath the gallows of Woden [the World-tree]

\* \* \* \*

It is a proverb that no man can get  
full recompense for his *own* son ;  
nor can one born of another kin  
stand to a man in the place of a brother.

\* \* \* \*

I was friendly with the King of Spears [Woden]  
and I put my trust in him believing in his plighted peace :  
till he broke, the Lord of the Wain,  
the Judge of Victory, his friendship with me :

Wherefore I do not worship the brother of Wile [Woden]  
the Prince of the Gods, nor look yearningly upon him :  
yet the Friend of Mim [Woden] hath bestowed upon me  
recompense for my wrongs, if I am to count up his better deeds to me.

The war-wont Foe of the Wolf [Woden]  
hath given me the blameless art  
yea, the poet's song, by which I may turn  
open foes into well-wishers.

Now the Wreck of my Two Sons is sung to the end,  
Night standeth near at hand .  
but I gladly and with a good will  
and without dread await Death !

This poem, badly preserved in a corrupt text, necessarily loses in translation much of its character, its metrical harmony, its fine concise rhythm, its powerful flow; yet I could scarcely have chosen for you a more typical or nobler utterance of old Teutonic heathendom than these lines, instinct with deep grief and wrath, but all-inspired with a courage which never let the man sink to despair or mockery, but enabled him to beat out in the very furnace of affliction a poem which for its beauty and strength is as wrought steel.

Human nature is everywhere much the same. Grief touches the same chords in us as it did in those heathen forefathers of ours long ago; or in those older heroes whose sorrow is enshrined in the Homeric Laments over Patroclus and Hector, or that Song of the Bow which David taught his people. Their primitive faith, clumsy and childish as it was, yet represented the higher instincts of their nature, the sympathy they felt for their fellows, and the awe that was upon them by reason of the unknown forces that compassed them about: our faith can do no more for us.

It is not in a man's creed but in his deeds, not in his knowledge but in his wisdom, not in his power but in his sympathy, that there lies the essence of what is good and what will last in human life.

[NOTE.—It is beside my purpose here to note the affinities of Teutonic Heathenism. The mythology is largely of the general Aryan type. There are many close parallels to the Celtic mythology in particular, and apparently also to Slavonic heathendom. This was of course to be expected. I do not believe that there are any traces of borrowings from the Latin or Greek mythology in the earlier Teutonic myths. It must be remembered that among the fairy tales of modern Teutonic nations are many which do not go back to the heathen days, but are drawn from foreign sources during or since the middle ages.]

## THE MYTHS OF CHRISTMASTIDE.

BY R. BITHELL, B Sc, Ph D.

ON the twenty-fifth day of December, we all of us, each in his own way, commemorate an event which has had a wonderful fascination for a large portion of the civilized world for eighteen centuries. Great obscurity has always surrounded that event: and, as mostly happens, when men are deeply interested in what is obscure, an enormous mass of conjecture, invention, myth, and superstition came into existence; taking a concrete form in tales, narratives, fables, which passed from mouth to mouth, and were repeated with as much solemnity and piety as if the vague memories of the story-tellers were as trustworthy as a divine revelation.

And yet these tales were in many cases inconsistent with each other; sometimes quite contradictory, always dependent on the caprices of memory; and worse than all, exposed to the corrupting influence of the prepossessions, superstitions, and dominating ideas of an illiterate and credulous people.

Then as to the origin of these stories. The narrators spoke of them as relating to events of quite recent occurrence. But in many cases we shall see that they are a simple survival of stories which had been in circulation for hundreds of years.

A grave evil pervades society just now. This nineteenth century has witnessed such astonishing achievements in physical science, that almost every man or woman who has access to our weekly and monthly journals picks up a smattering of scientific gossip, and an enormous majority of these readers remain smatterers to the end of their days. That in itself would be no harm to them or any one else. But they are not content with the rôle suited to their capacities. They must set themselves up as censors and critics, and seem to imagine that every one who in former days had beliefs and prepossessions different from their own must have been idiots or fools; some even go so far as to represent them as cunning, self-interested deceivers, whose main object was to mislead the people. This is very wrong. It is not necessary to accuse or even suspect any of these credulous natures of intentional deceit. On the contrary, everything in the literature of the period goes to show they were just as sincere and

earnest as you and I are, in gathering from their scribes and teachers the most trustworthy intelligence they could obtain.

Now we will not begin by assuming any part of the scriptural narrative as a *Myth*; that would be begging the question, an act unworthy of intelligent men. What we aim at is, to read the narrative just as it stands, and then place beside it some of the recognized and accredited myths circulating in the minds of the people of the same age. This will enable us to appreciate in some measure the difficulties and disadvantages under which they laboured. They had not the accumulated stores of knowledge which the science of near two thousand years has contributed, and which you are privileged to enjoy; and many things which appear to us absurd or physically impossible were accepted by them as quite ordinary events, and made but small demands on their credulity. For it must always be borne in mind that they were surrounded by tribes who were steeped to the lips in the grossest superstition; so that the wonder is, not that the gospel writers retained some of those superstitious beliefs, but that they shook themselves free from so many.

The miraculous birth of Christ is the first legend to demand our attention. And in order to judge of its mythical character or otherwise, it will be well to remember that all the great founders of religions came into the world with the sacred stamp of supernatural birth. Several of the Egyptian gods were born of virgin mothers. Gautama Buddha was said to have been born from the side of a virgin. Laou-tzse, the great predecessor of Confucius, born 604 B.C., was miraculously brought forth. His mother being in a solitary place, suddenly conceived by the simple presence of the vivifying power of heaven and earth, and bore him in her womb for twenty-four years. It is instructive to note also how familiar was the notion of supernatural births, and how difficult it was even for acute intellects to free themselves from the superstition. Even St. Jerome in the fourth century A.D. avowed his belief that so divine an intellect as Plato's could only have been the fruit of immaculate conception. Later still, we have the signs and portents of coming greatness attending the birth of Mohamed, and the superhuman precocity of the child himself, who, immediately on his birth, exclaimed, "God is great; there is no god but God, and I am His prophet."

Closely allied to this doctrine of parthenogenesis, is the belief in the incubi and succubi—male and female demons—which consort with men and women during sleep. As in New Zealand and the Samoan Islands, where they are said to cause supernatural births, so also in Lapland, where cases are recorded with all the seriousness of judicial and official detail. More amazing still,

when we turn from the haunts of barbarism and ignorance to the strongholds of Christian influence and learning, we find the saintly Augustine descanting on the popular notions concerning the visits of the incubi, which he says are vouched for by testimony of such high character that it would seem impudence to deny it. He does not, however, assert his own belief in these tales, or even in the existence of those amorous spirits. In later days, and all through the middle ages, the belief in them was so widely diffused, that churchmen and lawyers gave full credence to the stories respecting the visits of these nocturnal demons, and of their intercourse with men and women—stories which we, in these sceptical days, are inclined to regard as a cloak to the intercourse of visitors of a less spiritual nature.

We are not surprised, therefore, to hear the prophet proclaiming, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son," greatly as we should be astonished and scandalized to hear in these days any such announcement. It was at that date quite a familiar notion, and the supernatural was to the ancients the most natural. Matthew, therefore, when writing his Gospel, having arrived at a full conviction that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, would easily pass to the logical inference that he was born of a virgin; otherwise what would be the worth of the prophecy?

Be it noted, further, that the Romans of that period, and the Greeks before them, could never satisfactorily account for the vast superiority of their heroes in wisdom and power, but by supposing them to be descended from the gods and goddesses of their imagination. You that have read much of the history of early Greece will remember how the Greeks or Hellēnes derived their origin from Hellen, the son of Deucalion and Pyrrha: while in the history of Rome you will find the venerable story of Romulus with his descent from the god Mars and the vestal virgin Rhea Sylvia.

"Happy is the man," says a Latin author, "who can find out the causes of things." Very *unhappy* are most men when they *cannot* find out the causes of things. And because they are so unhappy, if they cannot find out a satisfactory cause, they must and will invent one. In this way we may account for the fact, that stories and legends like those I have described found currency among the people of former days. They saw that some men were pre-eminently sagacious, powerful, or virtuous; and they could find no convincing ground for their superiority but in assuming that they were begotten of the gods or born of virgins. A belief in the possibility of such births was then universal. In these days they are regarded as physiologically impossible. We are placed in this position now: (1) We may accept the deliver-

•

ances of science, and reject all these legends of superhuman births as fictions unworthy of credence; or (2), we may (to save our reputation as orthodox Christians) reject all but one, and still assert our faith in the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary. For my part, I believe that very few intelligent Christians, orthodox or otherwise, attach much importance to the story.

Intimately connected with the legend of the supernatural birth of Jesus is that of Joseph's dream. That some weight should be attached to this account of a dream is not so surprising, seeing that in these modern days an immense number of well-meaning people place great faith in dreams. Indeed, we are on delicate ground here, for our knowledge of dreams and their causes is very incomplete. What concerns us most in this inquiry is that the dream, if it ever occurred, could have been known to no one but Joseph himself. No mention is made of it except in the Gospel of Matthew; and when it is related the narrative is immediately followed by the familiar formula, "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet," which throws on the story an air of suspicion that it was put together in later times in order to give a show of consistency between the prophecies of the Old Testament and the statements of the New. Statements of this kind were easily credited in those days. To these simple, unsophisticated people there was nothing startling in the notion of revelation by means of visions and dreams. The world was full of such stories. You will remember how it is recorded in the history of Rome that the death of Julius Cæsar was foretold by his wife on account of a dream she had had. Of course dreams were occurring in thousands every night, and every dreamer was free to invent some sort of interpretation of his dream. Coincidences of a striking character therefore did sometimes occur. But even this admission does not justify us in attaching any importance to the report of Joseph's dream, because we have nothing but a vague tradition that such a dream ever occurred. We cannot dogmatically assert that it is a myth; but in the midst of so many myths it is not entitled to much credence. Nor does the most zealous apologist ever base any argument upon it. Those who have studied the Scriptures most profoundly tell us that many years elapsed between the birth of Christ and the date when the Gospel by Matthew was compiled. What that date was is variously estimated, and is not certainly known. But we all know how a narrative, as it passes from mouth to mouth, gets modified and corrupted. A mere suspicion, or conjecture, is quite sufficient to start a legend amongst a credulous people, and if it falls in with the prepossessions and expectations of the hearers, it soon acquires a hold on their minds which no reasoning can relax.



Following the narrative as given in the Gospels, we find the phenomenon of a star in the East referred to as an object of great significance. That a star of great brilliance did actually appear about this time there is no difficulty in believing. It was only recently, you will recollect, that in the month of December a very bright star was seen in the East, a little before sunrise. Its phenomenal brightness attracted much attention at the time, and some wiseacre suggested that it was a return to our hemisphere of the *Star of Bethlehem*. The phrase was immediately caught up, and repeated in the newspapers, until all London was agog at the prodigy. Of course, every one possessing an elementary knowledge of astronomy, and accustomed to the most cursory observation, might have recognized this brilliant star as the planet Venus, which just then appeared as the *morning star*; its unusual splendour arising from the darkness of the December night favoured by a clear sky. As is well known, Venus has a synodic period of 584 days—much less than two years and rather more than one and a half—so that it is a comparatively rare occurrence for its appearance as a morning star to fall within the last two weeks of December. Still it does so fall, and that with the greatest regularity; but at intervals so widely separated that the memory of one event dies out before the next occurs. Hence the wonder and curiosity excited by the phenomenon. Now, if such emotions are excited by so simple an observation in these days of scientific knowledge, can you wonder that in those ages when astronomy, as we understand it, was utterly unknown, much significance should be attached to the appearance of so splendid an object, supposing it possible to connect the popular recollection of it with the assumed date of the Nativity? For be it remembered that in that age almost every meteorological or astronomical phenomenon was looked upon as a portent. A meteor (or “shooting star,” as it was formerly called), an eclipse, a cloud of unusual shape or colour, a comet, anything sufficiently unusual to arrest the attention, was deemed significant of some impending calamity.

But there were other events occurring about that time which might have furnished a foundation for the legend of the star in the East, perhaps with greater probability. Astronomers tell us of a remarkable conjunction of the planets Jupiter and Saturn a few years before the date assigned to the birth of Christ. The learned Dr. Edersheim, in his *Life and Times of Jesus*, etc., and writing in the interest of orthodox Christianity, says:—

“Did such a star, then, really appear in the East seven years before the Christian era? Astronomically speaking, and without any reference to controversy, there can be no doubt that the most remarkable conjunction of planets—that of Jupiter and Saturn in

the constellation Pisces, which occurs only once in 800 years—*did* take place no less than three times in the year 747 A.U.C. or two years before the birth of Christ (in May, October, and December). This conjunction is admitted by all astronomers. It was not only extraordinary, but presented the most brilliant spectacle in the night-sky, such as could not but attract the attention of all who watched the sidereal heavens, but especially of those who busied themselves with astrology. In the year following (that is, in 748 A.U.C.) another planet, Mars, joined this conjunction. The merit of first discovering these facts, of which it is unnecessary here to present the literary history, belongs to the great *Kepler*, who accordingly placed the Nativity of Christ in the year 748 A.U.C. This date, however, is not only well nigh impossible; but it has also been shown that such a conjunction would, for various reasons, not answer to the requirements of the Evangelical narrative, so far as the *guidance* to Bethlehem is concerned. But it does fully account for the attention of the Magi being aroused, and, even if they had not possessed knowledge of the Jewish expectancy above described, for their making inquiry of all around, and certainly among others, of the Jews. Here we leave the domain of the *certain*, and enter upon that of the *probable*. Kepler, who was led to the discovery by observing a similar conjunction in 1603-4, also noticed that when the three planets came into conjunction, a new, extraordinarily brilliant, and peculiarly coloured evanescent star was visible between Jupiter and Saturn, and he suggested that a similar star had appeared under the same circumstances in the conjunction preceding the Nativity. Of this, of course, there is not, and cannot be, absolute certainty."—*Edersheim's Life and Times of Jesus*, p. 212.

You will have observed that the year assigned to the birth of Christ varies according to the computations of different observers and commentators. Reckoning from the foundation of the city of Rome, as is the custom with Western nations when dealing with the chronology of that period, you will perceive that astronomers have fixed upon the years 747 and 748 A.U.C. as the time when the conjunctions of Jupiter, Saturn, and Mars presented such a splendid appearance in the sky; whereas the common reckoning in use by the whole Christian world is 753 A.U.C. This common reckoning, however, is so generally acknowledged to be wrong, that the marginal reference in our Authorised Version of the Testament gives the *fourth* year before that called the year One as that in which Jesus was born. These differences are very perplexing to the student of Gospel history. It does seem amazing when reading the details as related by Matthew—Joseph's dream, the virgin birth, the star over Bethlehem, the

visit of wise men, the terror of Herod the king—all of them striking and impressive events—that Matthew and the other Evangelists should be so ignorant of the time when they occurred as to make a mistake of *four* or *six* years, more especially when we recollect that Matthew and the disciples were in daily communion with Jesus after his entrance into public life, and had abundant opportunities of learning the truth. The probability seems to be, that the events occurring in the life of Christ during the first thirty years were by no means of a striking nature; and that it is only when we read the condensed account as given by the Evangelists that they assume so profound a significance. Then there is the glamour thrown over the narrative by the fervour, the piety, and the credulity, of the disciples, which must be taken into account in making our estimate of its worth. We must bear in mind, too, that in those days when astrology constituted the main feature in the wisdom of the *wise men*, portents and prodigies far more astounding than those described by the Evangelists were recorded by the most sober historians and naturalists of Rome and the neighbouring nations. Tacitus, when writing the history of our own country, gives us a string of prodigies said to have happened in Britain immediately before the insurrection of Boadicea. First, in the town of Camelodunum, the image of the goddess of Victory, without any apparent cause, suddenly fell from its place, and turned its face round as if giving way to the enemy. Then there was a representation in the air of the colony laid in ruins, which was seen near the mouth of the Thames, while the sea assumed the colour of blood, and the receding tide seemed to leave behind the phantoms of human carcasses. Plutarch records another wild story concerning the death of one of the Archdruids of Anglesey, when the air grew black, and troubled and strange apparitions were seen; the winds rose to a tempest, and fiery spots and whirlwinds appeared dancing towards the earth. Livy, Sallust, Virgil, and others furnish us with numerous examples of superstitions like these; and you will all remember how, on the death of Cæsar, Virgil gravely informs us that the Alps trembled, and the sun was eclipsed.

Mythical as these legends are, it must always be borne in mind there was a substratum of truth in almost every one of them. It was in virtue of that little grain of truth it held its ground. That grain of truth being very precious, it is caught up by the imagination, and invested with all sorts of accessories, in order to impress the minds of the multitude with a sense of its importance. That the sun or moon should be eclipsed is easily believed; such an event occurs several times in a year. That mountains should tremble no one would dispute; earthquakes occur in volcanic regions

almost daily. That the sky should assume the colour of blood or of fire is a matter of common observation in all parts of the world. That the heavens should be shrouded in darkness for hours together at midday would not surprise a Londoner at all. But that these natural events are connected with the death of human beings, or are the precursors of disaster to nations, except as mere coincidences, we have no proof or evidence whatever. And since astrology went out of fashion, it is rare to find an individual who places any reliance on these coincidences.

Still there is, as all admit, a golden thread of truth running through most of these legends, and it is the part of a wise man to find that thread and trace it in its meanderings through the course of history. For *many* of these truths, obscured as they may be by the ignorance and folly of mankind, are of transcendent importance, and have been a source of light, comfort, and strength to myriads of the human family for ages.

There is, perhaps, nothing connected with this annual festival more strictly mythical than the legend which assigns the 25th of December as the natal day of Jesus Christ. Many competent writers tell us that the simple narrative of the shepherds watching their flocks by night ought to warn us of the error of supposing that it could have occurred in midwinter. In truth, there is no connection between this date and the birth of Christ. It was not till the fourth century of the Christian era that the festival was observed by Christians. Even then it was observed as a survival of an old pagan institution, and fully recognised as such. But the common people, whether Christian, Roman, Greek, or heathen, were always fond of their festivals and games; and as they could not be persuaded to renounce them, the heads of the Church hit on the expedient of incorporating them with their own ritual. This particular midwinter festival was dedicated to the sun-god, and had been observed most religiously for hundreds of years before the Christian era. The winter solstice festival, as celebrated by the Romans on the 25th of December in connection with the worship of the sun-god Mithra, appears to have been transferred to the Christian ritual about A.D. 273. At this date, and for many years after, the festival continued to retain its original name—the Birthday of the Unconquered Sun (*Dies Natalis Solis invicti*). In the Western Church it became a general observance in the fourth century, but with its ancient purport. It afterwards passed to the Eastern Church, and gradually dropped its heathen character, and acquired a name more in accordance with Christian sentiment—the Christian *Dies Natalis*, or, as it was afterwards called, Christmas Day. The real solar origin of the festival is clear from the writings of the fathers, and

was distinctly recognized by them, even after its observance by the Christian Church. St. Augustine and Gregory both speak of it in language which leaves no room to doubt what their opinions were; but the time had arrived when the incongruity of mixing up the origin of a heathen festival with the Christian ritual became too apparent, and we find the great Leo in a celebrated sermon rebuking the people for their adherence to what he called the "pestiferous persuasion," that the day should be honoured because of the rising of the *new sun*, when it ought to be observed as a memorial of the more solemn advent of Christ into the world.

From these utterances of the early Fathers you will see that there was no thought at first of the birth of Jesus as occurring on this day of the year, and the argument derived from it as a proof of the unbroken continuity of Christian evidence falls to the ground. The facts as related by contemporary writers are very simple. That particular day when the noonday sun ceased to fall lower and lower, and began again to rise in the heavens, was a day of great rejoicing among a primitive and pastoral people. It gave a promise of warmth and light, of spring and summer, of corn and fruit, of flocks and herds, and all that made life prosperous and desirable. That the people should feast and rejoice was the most natural expression of gratitude to the great Sun-god from whom all these blessings accrued. And it was just as natural when the Church had fairly enlisted the affections of the multitude that preachers and pastors should seize the occasion to direct their thoughts to the Sun of Righteousness. Thus the transition was made, and, once adopted, its solar origin, in Europe at least, was at length forgotten.

Connected with the season of Christmastide, no custom is more marked than that of feasting. Feasting, of course, is a part of every festival, but at Christmas this feature stands out more conspicuously than in any other. Several concurrent causes have contributed to this pre-eminence. There is nothing mythical about the fact itself in these modern days. It is a good, solid, tangible, edible, and sometimes, I fear, rather indigestible reality. That the custom should have been so widespread and so firmly established is not so easily explained until we come to examine the myths out of which it sprang. But when we find that eating and drinking was in ancient times and at certain seasons one of the most imperative and solemn of religious observances, we have a satisfactory explanation both of the origin and persistency of the practice.

Of these ceremonial observances there are two groups which bear more specially on the practice of Christmas feasting,—those connected with the sacrificial ritual of the Jews; and those arising

from the almost universal custom among primitive peoples of worshipping their dead ancestors.

When reading the instructions supposed to have been delivered to Aaron and the priests concerning their sacrifices, nothing is more conspicuous than the obligation of eating the flesh of the victims on the day of sacrifice if possible, and if not, then on the second day. If any were left on the third day it was to be cast out and destroyed. Aaron and the priests were to have the first bite (a nice arrangement for the priests), and after them the congregation of the people. Such an obligation must often have led to gorging. In after times we learn that the gluttony, drunkenness, and other excesses became so common as to amount to a scandal, which prophets and seers were free in denouncing. But customs which gratify the lower appetites and passions of men, when once established, are not easily extirpated, and they last for centuries when their religious import is forgotten or has ceased to be recognized. Thus it was with the Jews and the Jewish Christians who succeeded them. And had it not been for other influences which came into operation, the practice of excessive feasting would probably have died out.

But there were other influences at work, as I have already intimated, and these were the duties enjoined on most semi-barbarous nations arising from the worship of dead ancestors. Amongst primitive peoples it has at all times been difficult, as it is now, to get rid of the notion that after the death of the body the man still lives in some spiritual or ethereal form, needing much the same things for his support and comfort as were necessary during his lifetime on earth. Food, drink, wives, servants, horses, weapons, ornaments, some or all, according to the rank of the deceased, were deemed indispensable to his felicity; hence the funeral rites, some so horrible, some so grotesque, performed by survivors. And after the funeral, those daily sacrifices and offerings which occupy so large a portion of the time of superstitious worshippers, until at length every meeting of a family or tribe is celebrated by feasting. Thus the Chinese offer sacrifices to sun and moon (of course no ancestry short of that will satisfy our celestial neighbours), to stars and constellations, by burning not only beasts and fowls, but silks and precious stones on their altars, with the well-defined intention that the smoke and vapour may ascend to the objects of their adoration. The Siamese offers to the household deity incense and arrack and rice, steaming hot; the deity is not supposed to eat it all, not always any part of it; it is the fragrant steam which he loves to inhale. Among the Indians of the American lakes it is considered that offerings, whether consumed or abandoned by the worshippers, go in a

spiritual form to the spirit to which they are devoted. In India the Limbus act on the declared principle,—“the life breath to the gods, the flesh to ourselves.”

Many inventions were adopted in explanation of the fact that food left for the service of the deity or deceased ancestor disappeared. The sceptical and scientific young men of the period suggested that solid food might have been consumed by birds or vermin or by natural decay, and that liquids might have disappeared by evaporation. Some were so profane as to suggest that perhaps the priests had appropriated it. Indeed it became the duty of the priest, as minister of the deities he represented, to consume the first portions of the offerings; and the *duty* was subsequently regarded as a *privilege* (to which his successors have stuck), when the priest took the lion's share of turtle and pudding offered by the pious Fijian, or of the rice and fruit contributed by the West African. But there would often be more than the priest could consume, and this was distributed among the worshippers, or the poor, who were never absent on those occasions. Out of all these superstitious customs arose the practice of feasting as a religious observance, which spread so rapidly, that in later days there was scarcely a meeting of family or clan, scarcely a trade guild, village club, or city corporation, whose organisation was considered complete unless its members met together once or more every year for the purpose of dining and drinking.

The custom of drinking healths is closely connected with an ancient rite which gives a much more serious aspect to the practice than we usually assign to it. This is the custom of pouring out libations, and drinking at ceremonial banquets to gods and dead ancestors. The old Scandinavian drank to the memory of Thor, of Odin, and Freya; at the funerals of kings the same respect was shown to them; and thus the custom spread. In the south of Europe the Greeks in symposium drank to one another, the Romans adopted the practice, and transmitted it to the moderns, and at length it got to be deemed an indispensable mark of civility on the meeting of an acquaintance or friend. When the Christian religion spread through Europe the custom of drinking as a ceremonial rite was so firmly established, that it was found all but impossible to induce the people to abandon their old ways, and so the ministers of religion endeavoured to turn the practice to pious uses, by substituting the memory of Christ, Mary, Michael, and sundry other saints for that of pagan gods and heroes; and thus the most memorable feast of the year, and one of the most ancient of ceremonial rites, became associated with the name of the Founder of their religion.

CHRISTIAN AND PHILOSOPHIC.





## THE CHURCH CATHOLIC.<sup>1</sup>

*BY B. F. C. COSTELLOE, M.A.*

“THROUGH all the centuries of civilization”—so I imagine Macaulay’s New Zealander will say to an impartial generation—“through all the change and chance of History there runs one permanent power. Alike in the decay of Greece and the pride of Rome, alike through the tempest of the barbarian times and the gradual uprising of the kingdoms, from the ages when men accepted meekly their appointed place, to the latter day when every man’s hand was against his brother in the bitter war of individual competition, one system of things has stood secure, as a castle founded upon a rock stands above the rising and the falling tide, through the calm weather and the storm.

“An organization at first but of the unlearned and the outcasts of society—as was its Founder—placed under the ban of the most imperial despotism the world has seen, it was a little later the sister sovereign of that same Empire throughout the Roman world; and when the Empire fell beneath the greatness of its task, the throne of the Fisherman continued to stand in the very palace of the Cæsars, and the city where the Popes of four centuries had been driven like things of darkness underground became the world-capital of the Papacy.

“In one age the apostle of an ideal morality in an evil time; in another the conservator of learning; in a third the mother of the Arts; in all, the pattern and helper of political and social unity—this unchanging yet ever varying kingdom, this stern and yet most liberal philosophy, not only claimed to teach, but taught, as with authority, the children of men.”

Surely I may claim, my friends, that it is a startling item in the secular march of things, a masterful fact not lightly to be put by—no more than that other cardinal fact to which it leads us back—the life and death of Jesus who was called the Christ. He founded this power, He said it should not fail; and it has not failed.

<sup>1</sup> This address has already been printed as a separate tract, by the Catholic Truth Society.

Not once but many times, indeed, there came great waves of what the world thought disaster. In the beginning it was persecution. Edict after edict went out against them, till in the darkest of the night before the dawn an illiterate barbarian bent the force of the twin Empires to exterminate the Christian name: and knowing how easy was the detection of those who never would deny their crime, the imperial statesmen said that the dangerous rival of the Cæsars would not be heard of any more—but it is the statesmen who are forgotten.

Then there was the wave of Schism. The Arian heresy prevailed so far that men said the Church's time was ended upon the earth. Princes and peoples, Bishops and provinces, fell away, till there was but a handful left to continue the great tradition. Yet in a little while the Arians passed like a mirage, and men asked each other the meaning of the name.

It was an even darker hour, when a rising tide of moral corruption and a swift outbreak of intellectual doubt coinciding in the period of the Renaissance seemed to have killed the energies of the Church, and swamped in wickedness and infidelity the very Court of Rome. Yet the curious reasonings of the Neo-Pagans have left but faint echoes in the history of thought—the worldly Popes and the corrupt Cardinals and all the unfaithful stewards who dared to lift their mitres up against their Master have gone to their account—and there does not remain upon the institutions or the morals or the doctrine of the Church a vestige of the evil time.

Wave upon wave, in the very worst of the danger, came the great upheaval called the Reformation, wherein the spirit of Individualism, personified in the rough violence of Luther, rent the Church in twain; and in this rebellion and the disorders which accompanied and followed it, it seemed as if the bark of Peter must assuredly go down. Yet as even Macaulay—most typical of English Protestants—has borne witness, the work of the Council of Trent and the early labours of the Jesuit Order and all that inner Reformation which accompanied these, left the Papacy not weaker but stronger than before.

Finally, in our time, are come the days when countless new chapters of revelation are unrolled by science, and when a universal criticism, laying faith and reverence aside, has summoned every creed and every law to answer at the bar of reason for its right to be. All these great and good men who are to free us from the trammels of old time—whether they come as agnostics or in the name of evolution, whether they say they hold God needless, or have found our immortality to be a phantom, or cannot recognize that there is such a thing as sin—with one

accord in divers tongues cry out to us that the old creeds have passed for ever, and that the religion of the future, if religion there be at all, must be something less archaic than the Church of Christ. But in the midst of them—not denying whatever truth they have to show, adapting indeed the message of the ages to the later time, but upholding always her profession of Christ's teaching and the Christian Law—the ancient Church goes on.

It is in this permanence amid the changing centuries, it is in this enduring triumph in defeat, that even the most hostile critics have felt something of that great appeal which to her children the mere existence of the Church implies; and something of the force with which to their eyes is realized in her the prophecy of the Divine Founder. May we not well call it a fulfilment of that commission, with which, in different wordings, it pleased the Spirit that inspired the writers of the covenant to close three Gospels and to begin the Acts: "As My Father hath sent Me, so send I you. Go ye therefore into all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

It is in this light, then, that I desire first to present to you the mission and office of the Catholic Church. Its name insists upon its universal claim. It is not a congregation of persons agreeing together; it is not a School of Philosophy; it is not a Mutual Improvement Society. It is not even a Church among other Churches. It is *the* Church Universal—the Living Voice of God, in Christ's revelation, unto all people, through all time. It is for this reason, and this only, that it teaches as its Master taught,—not as the Scribes and Pharisees, but as one "having authority." It is for this reason that in God's name it makes that awful demand upon the faith of men which no human power, however arrogant, would dare suggest—that we who accept its teaching office shall accept those propositions which are "of faith," even where we do not wholly understand them, and even where they may seem to us to stand in conflict with other portions of our personal reasoning as to the things that lie within the human ken.

You will see at once that this demand cannot merely be waived aside as being incompatible with so-called rights of private judgment, unless you are prepared on the same principle to deny that there can be any authoritative revelation of God's truth at all.

Private judgment—meaning the paramount authority of that

which at any moment may commend itself to me—must dissolve any Divine authority of the Written Word, as surely as of the Living Voice. Luther, in his more consistent mood, was hardly less arrogant than Mr. Matthew Arnold in his assertion that the Canon of the New Testament was to be limited by his own theology. The Epistle of James, said Luther, cannot be the Word of God, because it is tainted with "Justification by works." This and this cannot be a *λογιον* of Jesus, says the modern critic, because *I* would not have said it.

I do not forget that one great watchword of the sixteenth century revolt was the appeal from the Church to the Bible. But the impartial critics have long since begun to recognize that the Bible is no ally of the Lutheran and Calvinist theology, much less of the eclectic system of the so-called National Church of England. And as the inevitable disintegration has gone on, the appeal to the Bible has come to be an appeal against the Bible.

I do not hesitate, indeed, to say that the teaching office of the Church and the existence of any real revelation must stand and fall together. If there be no Church, neither is there any Bible, unless you mean by a Bible an interesting but scrappy compendium of Oriental literature. If the Church be not a teacher, then there is not any Christ at all, unless it be a self-deluded Hebrew Socrates.

It will enable me to make my position clearer, if I may for a moment assume that those whom I address accept the proposition that the mission of Christ was to reveal to the whole world some knowledge of Divine things not attainable or not attained before. My position is that, if this be true, the claim of the Church to be a living voice, expounding with authority from age to age what was contained in that revelation and included in the deposit of faith, must of necessity be allowed. For if a revelation *was* required for the spiritual guidance of the race, it is self-evident that the truth intended to be revealed must be capable of being apprehended by all sorts and conditions of men, and in the coming ages of the world, with some reasonable security. A revelation which in its cardinal points was open to such absolute doubt, that the most honest, enlightened and spiritual men could arrive at conclusions diametrically opposed, and yet have no kind of arbiter to whom they could refer their difference, is no revelation at all. That any revelation should be useful for the world or conceivable as a providential design, three things surely are necessary; that it should be guaranteed in its inception; that it should carry a continuing certitude; and that it should be applicable to the intelligence and practical necessities of every struggling soul. It is written, indeed, that

the things of God are hidden oftentimes from the wise and learned, and are revealed rather to the babes and sucklings of the world. But assuredly it *cannot* be true that the revelation of Christ is a thing discernible by sundry scholars and gentlemen, having leisure and much knowledge, but wholly misapprehended or not visible at all among the "little ones" of whom He always spoke so carefully,—by the crossing-sweeper and the washer-woman, the labourer in the fields, the proletariat of the town. If from these, who need it most, the revelation of Christ is inevitably hidden, then God has mocked the universe. But if there be *not* a teaching authority and a living voice, how is the truth accessible to these?

Will you tell me they can read a Bible? I reply, that men better and more learned than they have found a thousand contradictory religions within the covers of the Sacred Books of Christianity. Even if it were not so, who shall guarantee to them either the degree of authority that attaches to these books or even the contents of the canon, if there be no continuing teacher in the world since the day when Christ last stood on Olivet, when not a line indeed of the New Testament was written?

The movers of the revolt against authority in the sixteenth century felt the difficulty dimly; but they evidently were not aware of the far-reaching scepticism which their protest logically involved. They adopted, as a working principle, the doctrine of the infallibility of Bible texts, supplemented by the conception of the "testimony of the Holy Spirit." On this view, earnest souls throughout Protestantism, prayerfully reading the Word of God with the intoxicating belief in a personal revelation of its import, were not long in setting up an infinite diversity of creed and practice, wherein for want of any pope, each teacher was his own. Even the monstrosities of the Anabaptists in the earlier time, or of the Mormons in our own, have come to them guaranteed by the same authority which guarantees the sturdy Calvinism of Scotland, the Puritanism of the Ironsides, the mystic spirituality of George Fox and William Penn. Of all this I merely say that, to my mind, such a revelation reveals nothing; and that if the office of the Messiah were but to live and speak for a little while, and charge a few uneducated persons to commit to writing a fragmentary account of what He did and said, and a still more imperfect set of epistolary remarks upon the theories of life and action which He taught, then He has left the world without any secure guidance in the ways of God, or any safe criterion of truth and right.

Surely the cult of isolated texts which is nicknamed "Bibliolatry" is no possible assurance of God's teaching. There are

texts which, taken apart, prove almost everything. And conversely there are many vital matters which no set of texts, taken apart, will satisfactorily establish. If anything is clear about the New Testament, it is that nowhere does it profess to set out either a reasoned philosophy of life or a comprehensive scheme of doctrine. Apart from the patent circumstance, that the "Discipline of the Secret" precluded the publication of what may be called the esoteric dogmas of the early Christians, it is obvious that in no one of the Gospels or Epistles has the writer any idea of writing a systematic exposition, or any notion that he is putting on record an exhaustive or complete account of the teaching either of Christ or of the early Church. To them, as to me, the deposit of faith was a body of tradition, providentially safeguarded by the earthly work of the Spirit of Truth, but not depending on nor bounded by the Sacred Books, for it was going on concurrently before and during their construction, by the same authority which adjudicated, first vaguely and afterwards with definite precision, upon the number and office of the Sacred Books themselves.

There is of course another sense in which all Christianity must depend on the Bible, for it is there chiefly that we find the historic warrant for the belief that such a life as Christ's was ever lived at all. But when we have used our Matthew, and John, and Paul, with Clement and Hermas, and the Pseudo-Areopagite and the rest, as we might use our Tacitus or our Josephus; and in the character of historic students have sifted out from these the fact that Christ's life and acts and work and personality are in the main as historic as Cæsar's; then, as a Catholic, I would say that we can collect from that account and the historic facts surrounding it the assurance not only that this momentous Person did found the Catholic Church—of which I am as certain as that Cæsar initiated the Empire—but also that in founding it He gave it a commission which, if He was truly God, was verily Divine. Thus it is that when, in course of centuries we find it declared that Matthew, John and Paul are "of the canon of scripture," and are to be read as inspired writings, whereas Clement and Hermas, however venerable, are not; then we can go back to Matthew, and John and Paul and re-read them not as mere historical critics but as humble students of the Word of God—and so are prepared to accept, on their authority endorsed by the authority of the faith, much in their narrative which, as historical critics, we were content to earmark as possibly legendary or of doubtful accuracy, and much in their doctrine which, as mere literature, might not have commended itself to a fastidious taste.

I have desired to define at some length this Catholic view of Christ's revelation and the Catholic attitude towards the Bible, as opposed to the Protestant theories on these matters, partly because it is vital to the understanding of Catholicism, and partly because it is seldom understood by those who stand outside the Church. I now pass to the consideration of some of the main lines of the Catholic teaching. It will be understood that I have indeed nothing to offer but a few suggestions, whose only value, if they have any, is that they have been borne in upon me by reason of much converse with those to whom Catholicism speaks the language of a strange country.

Upon the commonplaces of controversy I do not propose to waste time. The "errors of Rome" which exercise the mind of anti-Popery lecturers and other wise men, are for the most part beside the point. Too often, they are either flat misstatements of Catholic belief, imputing to us what no Catholic would dream of teaching—as that "the end justifies the means;" or they are a travesty of something which is the merest fringe of that great body of doctrine, such as the ancient usage of Indulgences or the celibacy of the clergy. Of such things, at a fit time, I should not despair of giving you a wholly reasonable account; but if a man desires to appreciate the Catholic Faith as it deserves, it is not with these high points of controversy that he will begin. It is the broad base-lines of that majestic plan that such a one will look for. It is the pregnant words which, by that Living Voice, the Master speaks to all the world and to each man's soul.

I cannot hope to make you know these mighty words—which Paul heard in the third Heaven—which all of us will hear when the last trumpet sounds—which, as we well know, descend at the altar rails into many a simple heart. To the ear of faith, they are not hard to hear; but to state them in the common language of the world, and above all in the customary speech of modern England, is a work that for its full accomplishment must wait, I think, till God shall send again that gift of "prophecy," where-with He touched the lips of John of the Golden Mouth, and lit the fiery eyes of Savonarola. Yet, however little power there be to do it, we must do the little that we may. For when we look back upon that woful time when the Body of Christ was torn asunder, and the mightiest semblance of God's Kingdom which the world had seen was rent by civil war, I think we cannot choose but say that these men, however we are to judge their motives or their aim, threw back the world's religious life by centuries.

We have had more than two hundred years of "Phoenix



cremation" since the Bull of Wittenberg was burnt; but I doubt if another two hundred will place us at the point the world might have reached, if the party of reform had been led by men of the type of Savonarola and of Thomas More, rather than by Luther and Henry VIII. That is our view; but of those who take any other, we may at least demand that they shall be willing to labour with us to restore the broken unity, to heal the secular war, to point the nations, amid a chaos that seemingly grows worse with every tide of books, to that City whereof the pattern is laid up in heaven, whose walls are justice and whose ways are peace, since it is builded upon the rock of an assured authority, and lit for ever by the light of God.

I must pray you therefore to follow me a little, while I try to tell you what Catholicism means to me. It implies, first of all, a deep tremendous consciousness of the heaven-high difference between good and evil, truth and untruth, righteousness and sin. If it seems to be rigid in its teaching and in its insistence on obedience, it is because it feels that the tolerance which holds that one thing may as well be true as any other, is but an opening of the floodgates of all misery. Tolerance we are perfectly ready to give where it is due. Where a man believes error honestly, only because he is somehow disabled from seeing the truth, we do not venture to condemn him; but we cannot talk of it as if he were as likely to be right as we are, or as if it did not matter which of us was right at all. For when we say that we *believe*, we mean it; and when we profess to hold the Truth revealed by God in Christ, we hold it as a precious gift, the wanton loss of which would be by far more terrible than any worldly calamity.

As with truth, so with the consciousness of sin. We are reproached, unjustly enough, with some unreasonable hostility to modern progress, and to that all-pervading spirit of emancipation which is the pride of the children of the Great Revolution. Neither with progress, nor with science, nor with freedom, has the Church any quarrel. She has herself in many ways been the promoter and guardian of them all; but she has always been and is and will be jealous of the *souls* that are in danger, for she counts the risk of moral evil as a thing far graver than material prosperity. As we would all say, surely, in our personal ethics, that no amount of money gain should weigh with an honest man against his moral degradation; so the Church says, upon her wider plane, that no amount of monetary or material progress will compensate a generation, if thereby it suffers moral wreck. "What doth it profit a man," she cries from age to age, "if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" "Woe upon

you," she cries to the heralds of comfortable Utopias of emancipation, "if by your recklessness the little ones of Christ are made to stumble and to fall." So much,—but no more. Churchmen have been mistaken, as we all admit, in their application of that principle. You are free to say bitter things about their politics, if you will. But if you would do justice to the spirit which animated even the narrowest among them, you must remember that the thought which underlay their warfare was the paramount importance of saving, if possible, these little ones among their flock, from what seemed a probable risk of being led to sin against God.

Throughout all the Catholic doctrine and the living practice of the Church runs the same dominant note of the consciousness of sin. That God is above all things infinitely Holy—that every single grave and deliberate sin is a disaster to the universe which we cannot measure—that, in the things of human life, sin is indeed, the *only* real evil that exists, and that to advance towards perfection of personal character is our only real progress—these are the alphabet of the Catholic rule of life. If it be asceticism to hold that our pain and pleasure are of absolutely no account in comparison with any moral gain, then we are all ascetics in our belief, however little we may fulfil that rule in practice. And the reason why we hold each particular sin a woful evil, is because it appears to us as a direct contempt of God, who is our absolute Lord and infinite Benefactor, and because we feel that to Him by His essential nature, evil must needs be horrible altogether. If we are to talk of justice, therefore, any one rebellion could be enough to forfeit all His grace, forego His promises, and alienate the sinner by the issue of his own choice from that Heavenly Presence wherein no discord dwells.

Not only does the Church so think of sin, but she goes on to say that even if by repentance and in God's grace the direct offence is put away, the rebel absolved, the alien soul brought back into the happy family who are at home with God, yet even so the mischief of that once-committed sin is not put by. For it is the nature of evil to work itself out still, in evil and disablement and loss; and these, which are technically called the "temporal consequence" of sin, must needs be suffered even while there is rejoicing in Heaven over the sheep which was lost and now is found again. It is in this connection that we think of Purgatory. It is the life beyond this life where souls, who are indeed not rebels now but God's beloved penitents, must wait and toil and grow till they have wholly purged away the consequences of forgotten sin, and wrought upon the frail and faulty characters they built themselves, that final beauty of holiness which is alone receptive of the Vision of God.

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But if the Church is stern and terrible in her anathemas on even the beginnings of moral wrong, she is not slow to preach the good tidings of the infinite mercy. I cannot profess to you that the God of whom she speaks is the God of those who go their easy ways and say, "He's a good fellow and 'twill all be well." She dare not bid us think it will be well, unless we will it. "He made us," says St. Austin, "without our consent, but He will not save us so." For with the consciousness of sin, the Church insists by logical necessity on the paramount fact of human freedom. When the human soul came from the creative fiat as a self capable of moral life, and therein stamped with the very image of the Divine, it bore both the mark of responsibility and the inalienable power, in God's despite yet none the less triumphantly, to cause evil things to be, in what was God's fair universe before. Why did He do it? we may all ask; but with our little knowledge of the secrets of the Eternal we cannot give much other answer than that, as far as we can see, it was not possible to separate the transcendent gift of a potential moral goodness, whereby we are indeed ennobled as no other gift could honour us, from its correlative possibility of creating crime.

On Free Will, then, the Church insists; but she insists no less on Grace. If God be stainless purity, He is no less essential Love. If He does not *compel* us to obey the Holy Law, at least He plies us with inducement, with suggestion, with facility of every kind which infinite wisdom joined to infinite love can offer for our aid. The world which we inhabit is the world our fathers made, and it is beset with the results of old ancestral sin: for it is the tragic property of wrong that its ill consequences affect not only him who does it, but also those to whom his life is bound in this great family of struggling souls. We live then, not in a Paradise of God's arranging, but in a Babylon of crooked ways, whose streets are littered with the rotting evil and barred with the accumulated rubbish of that past which we inherit. I do not forget, still less deny, that this same Babylon is a mighty city, wherein are also goodly sights and gracious buildings not a few, with many that, though still imperfect, and it may be dangerous in their perfection, are full of promise for the later time. I am no decrier of the noble inheritance our fathers left us; yet I say that when I think of it as the abode wherein we must work out each of us his own salvation, it would to me seem little better than a fever swamp or stricken city of the plague, were it not for the grace of God.

For, as the Church conceives, the teeming millions who are born and die, at mere haphazard as it were, along the crooked ways, where to the human eye there is no light nor joy, are not

forgotten. Up and down, as Jacob saw them, go the messengers of God. To all they come: to those who are working out, with fear and trembling always, yet with steady resolution, what they take to be for them the will of God; and to those who are wavering on the brink of danger; and to those no less—nay rather, more eagerly, if possible,—who have already sinned and are persisting in their sin.

Up and down, too, go the messengers, in those hard places of the world where circumstance, to human eyes, is as a Devil-giant coercing hapless lives not only into pain but into moral wreck. We do not say that evil circumstance, that plague-inheritance of ancient sin, is a light thing. We think, indeed, that He who judges all of us will make allowance amply. It seems evident that to some the avoidance of a special sin—say drunkenness—is easier than to others. To none, short of moral madness, is sin in truth a necessity; and the madman's acts are not sin. What we conclude is not so much that those who are thrown among evil surroundings are wholly to be excused, as that those of us who have had better advantage, have the deeper blame. But everywhere, and to each with the appropriate message, come the bearers of God's grace.

When the man who is clothed in purple and fine linen and fares sumptuously every day, is basking in a sensual ease, some warning, whether it take the form of Lazarus or no, awakes him to remember better things. When the stricken child, to whom life never brought a sweeter message than the harmony of the outward squalor and the inward pain, lies wistfully drifting towards the welcome end, there are hands unseen that clothe upon its soul the raiment of a lovely patience, and light up within its eyes the radiance of an unearthly lesson. When the successful Philistine is blotting day by day from the tablets of his brain the memory of any spiritual possibilities, there is a hand that constantly renews the unconsidered lines, so that he cannot choose but sometimes see them. For every battle there is an ally, for every frailty a support; with every temptation, however fierce it seems to our not quite impartial judgment, there goes forth for us the possibility of bearing it.

Conceiving thus of human life as a warfare wherein we daily fight with sin with the perpetual assistance of the grace of God, the Catholic Church presents to us, as the central fact of the world's history, the coming of the Christ.

It is not uncommon to reproach us with our acceptance of the supernatural; and our critics seem to be quite satisfied that the admission of any belief which involves things not explainable by so-called "natural law," is mere superstition—as absurd as witchcraft, and less respectable than Spiritualism or the Mind Cure. 1

will not stay to discuss this general point of view, but I will content myself with the remark that there is no necessary antagonism at all between Naturalism and the Supernatural, rightly understood. If Free Will be a fact, that alone transcends at once all that in the narrow sense is spoken of as "natural law;" for every free act, if it be truly free, introduces a spiritual new creation into the sequence of material and organic forces. Why should not the same be true in a wider field? If there be a personal God, why may *His* will not also intervene and mould the stolid course of physical change and consequence? And if there be such influence at all, why should we assume that it is opposed to Law? Rather must it be itself the action and evidence of a higher and more spiritual reason in things, which we perhaps cannot as yet follow, but which we too may some day see.

To the Catholic, then, the cardinal fact of the whole world's history is the birth, and life, and death of Christ. The old world leads up to it: the new is its development and outcome. Unique in all the centuries—lowliest and yet most royal—that dying Preacher, who was crucified by Jerusalem and Rome for saying that He was the very Son of God, is the corner-stone of the world fabric—the key of the human mystery—the Lord of Life. Reading the simple narrative, waiving all question of inspiration, if you will, we can come to no other conclusion but that He claimed to be the Incarnate God. Not at all a wise Socrates—not in the least, a later Isaiah—not a mystic nor a magician; but the very God—the Word made Flesh—the absolute "I AM."

"Think, Abib! Dost thou think? The very God—  
Lo, the All-Great were the All-Loving too—  
Lo, through the thunder, speaks a human voice,  
Saying, 'A heart I made, a heart beats here—  
Thou hast no power, nor mayst conceive of mine,  
But love I gave thee, with myself to love.  
And thou *must* love me, who have died for thee.'

The madman saith *He* said so—it is strange!"

Upon this absolute and central truth of Christ's Divinity, the Church insists as the focus and radiating point of all her teaching. I have spoken of her wide philosophy of sin and grace. For both, she takes us back at once to Christ. His life and death—the perfect sacrifice, the purifying and the reconciliation of unstained humanity—bore in it the needed infinite redemption, built in the counsels of the eternal mercy, the golden bridge by which every sinner may return. In the mystery of that Life and Death, at once true human and inalienably divine, is the origin of all grace. He is the link between the Finite and the Infinite; therefore He is the Way whereby we come to God, and whereby God communi-

cates Himself to us. In that, by reason of His humanity, we are the brethren of the Son of God, so are we heirs of the Heavenly Kingdom. In His Sonship is the eternal Fatherhood of God revealed. In that He died, He conquered death; in that He lived and liveth, He is the door of Life Eternal.

On all this, I say, the Catholic Church insists—and with far keener and more eager vigilance than any other of the confessions. For if Christ be not God, she feels, then is our hope vain. If He, who on a score of critical occasions claimed to be Divine, was but a madman or a fraud, let us not play at Christianity—let us rather eat and drink, for to-morrow we die. Because from the first she guarded this essential truth before all else, therefore she spent centuries in defining and maintaining the doctrine of the Trinity and the related doctrine of the Person of Christ, the Human and Divine. The elaborate formulæ of the Nicene theology and the rest are not scholastic subtleties or the quibbles of an oriental fancy: they are the necessary basis and security of the vital fact of Christianity. It is either these, or nothing.

And as she has insisted always on the doctrine of the Trinity, so, for exactly the same reason, she has been careful to uphold the honourable prerogative of her, whom from the earliest centuries she has styled the Mother of God. Wonderful, indeed, it is to any Catholic to hear the stale invectives which are still bestowed on “Mariolatry,” as if somehow the worship of the Divine were squandered on a creature; for there lives no Catholic so ignorant as not to be able to tell you the true answer—that we honour her precisely because to do otherwise would be to ignore the real Godhead of her Son.

Believing, then, that Christ is the “very God of very God,” who took upon Himself the human nature and dwelt with us on earth awhile, the Church presents His earthly work under four different aspects—though these also are in truth the same. He is the Saviour of the world; He is the Revelation of the Truth of God; He is the Perfect Life; and He is the Founder of the spiritual kingdom. You will see that each and all of these grow naturally and at once out of the main conception of His nature and His office. In the world-reconciliation, it was needful that men should learn to know God better, and that they should be taught to do His will, seeing that the human wisdom and human good intentions had not sufficed. Equally, as I have sought to show you, was it necessary that an abiding institute should be created—not indeed a kingdom of this world, but yet a palpable, continuing, organic fact—a sure custodian and an abiding witness.

On some of these points I have dwelt already—of all, there is abundant notice in the Gospel texts. To insist on them at length

here would carry me beyond my scope. I pass therefore at once to say that beyond this fundamental insistence on the Divine character of Christ, there is another derivative sense in which the Catholic Church insists constantly upon the supernatural.

I said that, in her view, the life of man must needs be constantly assisted by the spiritual help of God; and that she presents the life and death of Christ as being, in the design of Providence, the fountain of this unfailing Grace.

Now it is her special pride and office to be a means of salvation available to all—to be a Church truly Catholic, to whom nothing of humanity is alien, from whom the beggar can draw spiritual wealth as surely as the prince or the professor, though they too find, if they will seek it, all the special help they need. To the end that there should be in the world such tangible and easy ways of entering into the Heavenly Communion, of appropriating, each poor nature for itself, the riches of the treasure of the Lord, the Church believes that Christ ordained that series of symbolic rites, adapted to the crises of our life, which we call Sacraments; and that it was His will to appoint concerning these that they should be to His disciples (apart from prayer) the ordinary channels of the communication of that grace and pardon and spiritual sustenance which in and through the office of our Saviour we claim from the Almighty. True is it, that this infinite ocean of Love is waiting for us all the while. Yet; in the spiritual order, Love, too, has its own laws, and this is one of them. That by Christ's appointment we draw its channels into our souls as freely and as fully as we will, or as our capacity for receiving it will allow, by obeying the sacramental ordinances of the Christian dispensation in faith and love and humble trust in Him.

I need not tell you—for it is patent—that of this sacramental system the central fact is that, which more than any theoretic point marks off the life of the Church Catholic from everything beyond it—the acceptance of the Real Presence of the Lord upon our altars under the sacramental form.

To those who approach this as mere critics, bringing neither personal experience nor sympathy to aid them, no man can hope to say what it implies. To them I will only say, "You read the *Imitation* and you hold it a great book—one of the treasures of the world—a mirror and revelation of the holiest in man. Read, then, the sacramental chapters of that soul-swaying meditation, and go back and scoff at us, if you can." Or let them go, if they prefer life to literature, into any Catholic church—not at a fashionable midday Mass, but in the early morning, on some great day like Easter or the Birth of Christ—and watch the still, rapt glad-

ness that has fallen on the meanest faces, watch the fellowship and democracy of the altar rails, catch the energy of better effort and of new beginning, and the enthusiasm of sincere repentance, and the nobility of high worship that makes the air electric, and tell us, if they can, that it is all no more than mummery and priestcraft, folly countersigned by fraud.

All this may be deception, you will say; and undoubtedly, although subjective testimony may be much to us who have believed, to others it is at the best a noticeable phenomenon. Something more is wanted. We must show a reason for our faith in this most startling or most mystic doctrine of a spiritual Presence that transcends not only sense but maddest imagination, of which yet there is no outward sign at all.

Our first reason, naturally, is in the Bible text itself. We say, and I confess I cannot conceive that an intelligent atheist would doubt it, that Christ said neither more nor less than what the Church teaches concerning the Eucharist, not only when He founded that rite on the most solemn occasion of His intercourse with His Apostles, but at many other times; and, above all, in that test discussion which is recorded in the sixth chapter of St. John. But strong as is the Scriptural argument, the Church has another that is perhaps still stronger.

The doctrine of the Real Presence, linked with that of the ordinance of the Last Supper as a mystic, yet most effectual commemoration and representation of the Passion of the Lord, is the essence and import of "the Mass." Now that great act of common worship and of mystic sacrifice, of solemn commemoration and public prayer for all the living and the dead, is, and has always been, the central office of the Church—in every age and nation substantially, nay even minutely, the same. Being so notable a corporate act, it has been always safe-guarded by jealous provision for a settled liturgical form. There is no time in the history of Christendom when that liturgy is not before us as a palpable and most significant record; for in every age and under every variation it testifies beyond cavil to the belief in a Real Sacramental Presence of the Lord as the whole point and meaning of the great office. I suppose there are many able and learned persons who imagine, in a very careless ignorance, that the Mass is a "fond thing vainly invented" somewhere in the Middle Ages. Yet nothing is more palpably untrue.

The case stands thus. There exist certain great types of the Liturgy of the Mass—all perfectly at one in their intent and doctrine and general plan, and even in their main forms of prayer and in unexpected coincidences of phrase and action, yet varying in practical arrangements and filled in with details evidently



arising by local usage. Each of these is clearly *parallel to* and not *derived from* the others. Each is attributed by the local tradition to an apostle, who was the early founder of the local church. Each is carried up, by a separate chain of documentary and historical evidence, to a time not very many generations removed from the living witness of those who saw and heard the Lord. What is more clear as a mere matter of scientific historical criticism, than that these great trunk lines of liturgical tradition must have diverged from a common Apostolic type or norm—and that this type must have been, as they are, a central and sacramental and commemorative office, involving a Real Presence, and being to them in all essentials what the office of the Mass has been to us to-day?

Probably many of you will be incredulous, but the proofs are very simple. At Rome, we have the Liturgy which is now the common, though by no means the only form used in the Catholic Church, and we trace it back so far, that details of its use are attributed to Popes who ruled between 100 A.D. and 120 A.D. The names of the Saints commemorated in the text are known to have been added by gradual accretion, and yet all of them, with a solitary exception, were martyred before A.D. 310 (the excepted date being 362), while the earlier names go back to Linus, Cletus, and Clement, the immediate successors of Peter's Chair. Ambrose of Milan, himself the editor of a special rite still preserved there, cites some of the Roman prayers soon after 400 A.D., as being taken from what he then called "the ancient rites." Like all the others, it was preserved in oral tradition, by reason of the Discipline of the Secret, until the fifth century; but we have on record, in the Epistles of St. Innocent I. in the fourth century, that Pope's opinion that the Liturgy was in fact the true tradition given by St. Peter to the Church at Rome.

Turn now to the other great rite preserved at Alexandria, which in like manner was committed to writing by St. Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria, after 400 A.D., and ascribed by him and by the whole Church to the direct oral tradition of St. Mark himself. The internal evidence of the prayers, as they were then set down and have been since preserved, points to the period of persecution, say 300 A.D., as the date of some of the added prayers, the body of the rite being therefore earlier. The condemnation of the Eutychian opinions in 451 led to the schism which detached all the Copts from Rome: yet the Copts have to this day a form of the same Sacramental Liturgy of St. Mark and St. Cyril, which was old among them then.

If you go to Syria, the great Liturgy of Jerusalem, ascribed to the tradition of St. James himself and to the direct development

of the Church described in the Acts of the Apostles, is the Liturgy long used by and still preserved among the Eastern Eutychians, who therefore held it as the true tradition before 450. The Nestorians, who have been separated since 431, keep to this day a related rite, named from St. Thaddæus the Apostle. Indeed, we are told that Nestorius was the first of the schismatics of whom it is even *alleged* that he had altered the ancient Liturgy. It is curious to remember that the Portuguese, when they discovered Malabar in the sixteenth century, found a native Church there using this very rite; and it is now clear that they had it from the Nestorian Church of Babylon, where it was in use before 400. But we carry this rite still further back with an absolute historic certainty. For it happens by good fortune that there are preserved to us the Sunday-school lessons of St. Cyril, who was Bishop of Jerusalem in 347. In these he actually instructs his catechumens in the ritual and meaning of the Mass, and for that purpose he explains point by point this venerable liturgy of St. James, much as we have it still as the basis of a hundred local rites throughout the Catholic East.

Now each of these three great normal types of the Eucharistic tradition—that of Peter at Rome, that of James at Jerusalem, that of Mark at Alexandria—is perfectly independent. No scholar can dream that any is derived from, or even moulded by, any other. The hundreds of minor variations fall to the scholar's criticism easily under one or other of these or other equally ancient types. But the types themselves are sisters, not interdependent but collateral; and therefore they are sisters of a common stock. These three or four most venerable types—to leave aside the others—*involve an archetype*. Yet each of them by about the year 300, was not only established but old, and based by those who loved it upon an Apostolic tradition. Who made the common archetype, I pray you, which Rome and Alexandria and Jerusalem and Babylon assume? In what common Eucharistic centre do these traditions meet? Who taught the half-dozen intervening generations to accept this appalling mystery with common certainty, as a thing not doubted even when dogmatic heresy was rife and all the world rang with polemical debate—as a thing which every schismatic took with him, whatever else he left? Who taught it, I ask, or could have taught it, but the Master who, on the world-historic night, commanded them to do in memory of Him the solemn act which He did then.

If you still doubt what I say of the Apostolic origin of the Eucharistic Act, I would have you read what is not hard of access—the *Apologia* of Justin, who is called the "Philosopher," addressed as early as 138 A.D. to Antoninus Pius, in defence of

the Christian faith. Therein, speaking generally of the existing rites, for he had lived in Syria and at Alexandria and Rome, he describes the outline of the Mass. As the core and heart of it, he insists in plain terms on the doctrine of the Real Presence. With great simplicity and directness he bases both the doctrine and the office upon the institutional words of Christ. And as if to exclude any caviller who might suppose it a new idea of his own or his contemporaries, he goes on to remark as a striking fact that "the evil spirits" (as he puts it) "have introduced this very solemnity into the mysteries of Mithra," the then fashionable ritualism of Rome; proving so that to his knowledge,—and he was a master of all the schools before his baptism,—the Mass was older than these fantastic Eastern rites, and was in fact, as it claimed to be, the commemorative office framed by those who first received the Eucharist at the very hands of Christ.

If then the Mass we have to-day, was known as the ancient and undoubted worship of the Churches by this Syrian convert, born when John, if dead, was only just dead, and to whom John's personal disciples and the immediate followers of James and Paul must have been known, what will you say? If the "Supper of the Lord," which Paul was setting in order among the Corinthians about 50 A.D., was not the same thing as Justin was admitted to about 120 A.D., who altered it? Not the beloved disciple, or his pupil if you will, who wrote the Fourth Gospel; for the Fourth Gospel insists most markedly on this very Eucharistic doctrine. Not the Church at Rome; for there, as I have said, the tradition preserved by well remembered records from the joint martyrdom of Peter and Paul down to the Sacramentary of Gelasius is unbroken by any hint of variance. The answer is that there is no change, no innovation; only an untiring effort to hold fast the ordinance of the Saviour, who left it as His most precious legacy when He went out to die.

Terrible it is, if you will—surpassing human speech—this point of heavenly fire that lives within our worship. You will tell me it is vain to trace it back to the Apostles, for the thing itself is past believing. I admit that if Christ be not God, our hope is vain—our holy office, as you say, a mummary—our Communion with the Lord of Heaven and Earth a bitter fraud. But I warn you that if you come with me so far as to agree that Christ was, and that He was Divine, you must come further. If you repudiate the whole record, I understand you. But every competent critic now admits that quite worthy witnesses are before us. If you take the witness as of any weight at all, you cannot put aside the clear consensus and wilful repetition of the three Synoptics who record the words of institution; nor the still

fuller and more deliberate enforcement of the same by Paul ; nor, above all, that vivid dramatic sermon in the sixth of John.

I have dwelt long upon the subject of the Mass and of the Eucharistic doctrine. It is, I think, an obvious dividing line between those conceptions of faith and worship which in our own day are tending towards Catholicism, and those which lead away from it. I have only time to pass now to one other aspect of the Catholic Church, in which it appeals with peculiar force to the present struggling generation, and to the coming time.

As the root idea of the Protestant Reformers was flat individualism, so the dominant note of the Catholic conception of the world is solidarity. In the beginning, the Church was all but a communism. In the days of persecution, all who had, without other compulsion than the love that Christ revealed, gave up their wealth to feed the needy ; and this fraternal distribution was directly organized by the Church. At all times, though she has allowed private property, she has suggested that to forego it is the better way. At all times, to those who keep their own, she has preached a far-reaching duty of charity to all the world, which if it were carried out, would leave little disparity to mourn.

As in property, so in all else. The universal brotherhood has been to her no empty name, but a world-reforming fact and law. Strongly, through bribe and menace, she has striven to uphold the equality of prince and peasant before the moral code ; and it is her pride to remember that even when the hatred of the English Crown was the penalty of refusal, a weak and hunted and tormented Pope refused to mete out to the Tudor any other marriage law than would be meted out to the meanest hind within his realm.

And no less is it our pride that we can say that while the Church stood upright, here and elsewhere—even to the latest hour of what they call her worst corruption—she provided for the people a career, far more sure and better worth their following than the most advanced democracy has given them since.

Take the great Churchmen, who, by their sheer ability and learning, did the chief part of the government of the world for many a century. They are a noble line, promoted often to an almost royal dignity, and in the vast majority of cases for no reason except their talents, or their virtues, or both ; and of these men an enormous multitude are the children of the poor. There was not a country side that had not within reach its abbey or its cathedral ; and where a peasant lad showed promise, and desired at once to serve God and to make his life useful upon a wider plane, it was very certain he would be put to school and made a "clerk ;" and once a clerk, the Church to him was but an

organized democracy, wherein nothing, even to the Papal chair, was inaccessible to merit. You have sown the land with schools; you have improved the Poor Law and multiplied philanthropies; and you do well: but for all these things it was easier for the deserving helpless ones of the earth to find help in their need, and easier for those whom God endowed with power to find their rightful place, before Henry sacked the monasteries and made himself the English Pope.

If you pass to social or to political liberty it is still the same. In the Brotherhood of Christ the Church saw neither bond nor free. The patrician maiden and the slave-girl, in the Acts of the Early Martyrs, meet as equals and as friends. As swiftly as human inertia allowed, the Church abolished slavery. In the home, she found woman degraded by the licentiousness of the age. She freed them at a stroke when she declared that marriage was a Sacrament of God; and when she placed above her altars, as the symbol next in holiness to the Incarnate God, her stainless ideal of womanhood and maternity, she did more to hold in check men's proneness to brutality than all the laws that ever punished crime. In our own and every other struggling commonwealth, when the feudal power was at its worst, and threatened to engulf for ever the liberties of the tenants of the soil, it was the Church more than any other single force that bearded these lords of war, and made it possible for the common people to achieve their liberty. So it was the Church that gave articulate voice to justice and to civic reason, in adapting first and in administering afterwards the codes of written law; and here, as everywhere, she was but seeking, after the rough-hewn fashion of human institutions, to carry out Christ's paramount commandment—the Law of Love.

But not only within each single state was she a power for justice and emancipation—she was more and greater than them all. By the character of her Catholic title and her Catholic commission, she held up before the peoples the ideal of a world-community. Amid the lawless violence of the mail-clad centuries, she provided at least a possible arbiter. And however men may sneer at the ambition of the Popes, the European peace would be much nearer than it is to-day if the notable example of Prince Bismarck could be adopted as a commonplace of diplomacy.

When the Empire fell, the Church upheld its claim. To this hour, she refuses in the name of her commission, and she will refuse, to bind herself by any frontiers, or to be otherwise than independent in her own field of every national government whether it wears its crown in Rome or no. She knows that the world-progress is hampered while our narrow frontiers hedge us in with prejudice and tariffs, and our national self-seekings and

distorted patriotisms keep all the nations lowering at each other like caged beasts, and stifle industry and freedom and every noble thing beneath the immeasurable load of military preparation; she looks for a better time when the human brotherhood may be, even in statecraft, a practical reality.

Yet not even here can I pause. For if she prophesies of a World-State, and laughs at the little fences statesmen draw upon the map, no less does she bid us think of even such a commonwealth as but one province of the Heavenly Kingdom. "The Church" to her cannot be bounded by the little scene whereon we play our parts a little while; for the Church is the Body of Christ. In our Father's house there are many mansions; and this is but the outer porch. Beyond the grave her children are not far away. She has taught and always teaches that they are linked to us, and we to them, in that Community of Saints which reaches upwards to the throne of God. It may be that they, our brethren, are of the company of the Church Suffering—purging away, by what endurance and patience and travail we know not, the mortal stains they carried from the warfare of the Church Militant, where we were comrades and brethren in arms. It may be that already, if with our measures we can rightly appraise what with the immortals takes the place of time, they have passed into that other company of the Church Triumphant, whose place is in the sight of God. Yet wheresoever they may be, our comrades, we can reach our hands to them and they to us, in prayer and spiritual fellowship, and unseen in God's ordering a common life goes on. Members we are then, of one another—here and in the unknown: members of one transcendent spiritual yet organic whole—and that whole is the Body of Christ.

Endless, of course, are the things that yet remain to say concerning the great tradition of the Catholic teaching. Endless also, I believe, are the ways in which it would be well for us and for our children, if the Catholic Truth were so stated in our modern speech, that those who now say that every Catholic must needs be either knave or fool, could understand the things that they despise. For the present purpose I am content if I have been able in any measure to set forth these three outstanding aspects of the Catholic belief—the claim of the Living Voice, the treasure of the Sacraments, the Brotherhood of the Body of Christ. Like all else in Truth, they are but different aspects of the same thing,—the application, namely, of the work of Christ to the needs of all humanity. They are the same in this also, that in each there comes the note of Catholicity. In Christ all men are one,—and that, not merely in any formal or theoretic unity, but in a brotherhood which, if we could once translate it

into the formulæ of government, would leave Democracies and Socialisms behind.

Those who take themselves to be the best exponents of Western civilization, have been accustomed of late to treat the Church with scant courtesy; and I agree that if, as some of them suppose, religion, and perhaps duty also, is altogether to vanish from the earth, then the study of Catholicism would be but a waste of energy. But if, as I believe, the moral and religious consciousness of man be no less a fact than knowledge or physical growth or life or death, then I claim that this transcendent expression of religion through the Christian centuries demands a hearing from them all. They call it dead, yet it is more alive, in the moulding of humanity, than all their schools. They say it belongs to a forgotten past, but there are not wanting signs that it shall inherit the future. In the field of ethics and religion, England, like the rest, is dividing rapidly into two camps—those who do and those who do not hold that religion is unnecessary and any reality of God superfluous. When that division is complete, it will be seen that the walls of the camp of the believers are but the fold of the Catholic Church.

In the field of social and political relations the old order changes day by day more swiftly. Much is gone and more will go. Surely one thing is clear: that neither just industry nor social health nor noble government is possible, unless we build on something better than self-seeking, and appeal to something holier than "the desire of a remembered pleasure"? Individualism, and the Manchester School, and freedom of contract, and all the theories that sought justice in the war of interests and progress in the clash of infinite selfishness, are being carried out before our eyes to burial. Protestantism is fighting for its life with organic disintegration and intellectual doubt, to which it can oppose neither a reasoned philosophy of life nor any authoritative gospel. It cannot rescue the body politic, for it cannot save itself. The masses leave it on the one side, and the leaders of opinion on the other. Is there no hope at all, of light and leadership in the coming time?

I submit to you that the promises of the Messiah have not failed. His followers were the social saviours of the earlier Europe; it is not more difficult to help the centuries that lie before us. That which He promised to uphold, lives on; and, gathering up the ancient truth and the modern hope, it points the nations, now as always, to that true Republic, where freedom is the law of duty; where all are equal as the sons of God; and where fraternity is the willing service of the brotherhood of Christ, when the Kingdom of the Lord shall come.

## THE MASS.

*BY B. F. C. COSTELLOE, M.A.*

I FELT that I was attempting a difficult task when I ventured to address you last year on the broad subject of "The Church Catholic." Your kindness and patience then have made me think it possible to accept your renewed invitation, and to speak to you of a subject harder still for me to deal with wisely and for you to rightly apprehend; for I suppose there is not one of the institutions of the world which has been, and is, so great a stumbling-block to modern Englishmen as is that great historic and spiritual fact which is the subject of this address.

I have taken it for two converse reasons. To all Catholics it is, and has been since Christianity began, the very heart and centre of the spiritual life. To the majority of Englishmen, and to most of you, it must have hitherto seemed to be a relic of barbarism and a psychological enigma. The very name of the "Mass" has been for centuries a byword among you, connoting to the unheeding generation of our fathers only an exploded superstition and an aimless mummery. In our own time, since Protestantism of the original type has begun to give way before the advance of a more consistent unbelief, the great names and uses of the Church have not been visited with so much obloquy,—perhaps, with some, because they have been relegated to a deeper contempt. Yet I dare to hold and say that what lack there is among you of sympathy, of respect, nay of belief, is in the main the outcome not of an evil will but of a lack of opportunity; and it is for that reason that I make bold to try if at least some poor beginning may be made by setting forth the Catholic beliefs in language less strange to your own habits of thought than is the common language of our books of doctrine or devotion. That the task is too great for me, I know only too well. I have neither the knowledge nor the spiritual insight, neither the preparatory training nor the official authority, which that man must have who would state the truths of God to this hurrying generation. And yet, poor preachers though we be, there lies, I think, on all



of us a duty, when occasion comes, to do our little spell of work in building up the roads of truth. In the day of beginnings we may be able to do little; but if we do our little work, in God's own time "that prophet" shall rise. London is not more proud of the swift advance of culture than was Florence in its new birth of knowledge and triumphant art; yet Savonarola led Florence captive, in the power of God. London is not half so hopeless of Christianity, not half so sunk in the mad endeavour to fill up the void of the spirit with the sweet things of the flesh, as was the Paris of fifty years ago; and yet all Paris was swept into reverent attention by the voice of Lacordaire. Pray with me, my friends, if you still pray, that God may send His prophet unto us also—if it be but as one crying in the wilderness, that after all the long confusion in the way of the Lord may be made straight again, and His good tidings preached abroad; so that they who have ears to hear—they who have not stopped the ears God gave them with the wax of self-indulgence or with the wool of slipshod, careless, idle ways of thought—may hear and understand.

I have said that to the majority of the English people the Mass is a byword; and yet there is a large and important section of them who have nevertheless been drifting steadily towards all forms of Catholic usage and belief. Those who are not of them may mix but little among them; but if they would reckon with the currents of the time, they cannot overlook the startling growth of a pro-Catholic party in England. I do not mean the mere triflers in ecclesiastical fancy work. I mean those who speak of sacramental, of eucharistic, doctrine in terms an outsider would not easily be able to discriminate from our own. The fact has its significance, even for the world of unbelief. If you count those who, since Newman, have joined the Church outright with those who have come so close to it that for this purpose they are our allies, you will find that there is a Catholic school of thought among you which may well claim a respectful hearing. Men who are eminent in politics ought to be no bad judges of a thing so human as religious tendencies—and it is a curious fact that the actual chiefs of both the political parties are earnest and avowed believers in everything probably which I shall have to say to-day.

It is not much to count heads, but we have startling things to say, which to many of you may seem but a midsummer madness. Therefore, we pray you to remember that, apart from other times and other lands, there are those among your political leaders, among your judges and your greatest lawyers, among your best scientific men, and in every rank and circumstance of English life, who, being no more fools than any of you, yet find it possible

and imperative to believe these strange and startling things, as truths for which they would be well content to die, if need were, and by which, as their main spiritual stay, they live their daily life among you. This does not begin to prove that our beliefs are true; but it does prove that they are not incredible.

How shall I even begin to speak of it? To us of the family of the faith it is a fact so familiar, so closely woven in with all we know of God and of the spiritual experience, that we hardly put it into words. You may haunt our ceremonies and know our printed prayers by heart, yet if you do not bring to them some Catholic sense, you will find but the tinkling cymbal and the sounding brass. In the first centuries it was pre-eminently "the secret"—that fact of the new life so holy, so beloved, that no profane eye should see it, and none but they who were prepared to love it should even know the mystery. We have fallen far, in these easy times, below the fervour of their devotion; yet in our measure the same is true of us. To-day, as then,—in this city, as in the catacombs,—it is the secret of holy souls, the guarded heart of fire in many a commonplace, unnoticed life. Outwardly it may seem to you often a trivial thing, with tinkling bells and inartistic ornament; but equally in the silence and the song, in the poverty and in the pride, it is the tense communion of our myriads of souls, each for itself and in its own way, with the hidden presence of the Lord. The Mass is the one essential act of the public worship of the Church. It is designed to combine the new idea of a sacrament with the old tradition of a sacrifice. It is in truth a hundred things in one—as complete in its adaptation to every private need as it is rigid in its ritual adherence to the canons of the earliest liturgy. But, above and before all else, it is the commemoration of the death of Christ, and of that Last Supper when He left this ordinance to His disciples, as a momentous legacy and a last command.

There are two linked beliefs relating to that Last Supper which must be borne in mind by every one who would approach in any honest way the consideration of the Mass. They are the sacramental doctrine of the Eucharist, and the belief that Christ then founded by His recorded words and deeds an ordinance since followed in the Liturgies of the Church. The vindication of these involves, of course, all Catholicism: the testimony and value of the New Testament, the question of the person and office of Christ, the reality of any religion, the personality of God. The Catholic view of the world hangs together; you must take it or reject it as a whole. It is, as I have already sought to show you, the only consistent Christianity—the only escape from the quicksands of private interpretation or the deep sea of sceptical suspense.

The proof or disproof of this claim is the ultimate question. For the present, however, I take it that your chief desire is to know *what we mean*; and therefore I say that, for the apprehension of our meaning, you must first realize that we do in truth believe in the world-historic scene in that upper room. It is in that narrative—the account, as we maintain, of a Divine Person—that we find the key to and the warrant for the office of the Mass; and I think that unbiassed readers will probably agree with us that, if the words recorded were said at all, their sense is not really doubtful. They certainly were not understood in any but the one way, either by the Apostles or their immediate pupils, or by the ages of the Church, or even by the countless heresies, until Luther and his friends went a-hunting for new interpretations.

Recall for a moment the familiar story. The strange sending of Peter and John to claim the room “because the Master’s time was near at hand:” the keeping of their last Passover, with all that it implied to them as the central office of the Jewish system, in which the lamb was slain in token of the saving of Israel out of the land of bondage in the early days; the memory in their minds of His repeated prophecies that He would leave them soon, and of that recent scene when the Healer of Lazarus rode into Jerusalem amid the hosannas of the people, waving triumphal palms; the sudden shock when Jesus girt Himself with a towel and began to wash the feet of all the twelve, that, as He said, they might be “wholly clean” for some great event to come; the high words of commission that followed, “Verily I say unto you, he that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth Me, and he that receiveth Me, receiveth Him that sent Me;” and then the culminating words of institution,—concurrently recorded with religious care in the three synoptic gospels, designedly omitted in the Gospel of John,—commemorated by the testimony of the Apostolic writings, and by the unbroken tradition of the Church’s Liturgies,—when (having said, “With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer”) “He took bread, and giving thanks He brake it (*εὐχαριστήσας ἔκλασε*), and gave unto them saying, Take and eat. This is My body which is given for you. This do in commemoration of Me.”

You will know that when He says, “*Do this*,” He uses a word appropriate to a sacrificial act, “Do this office, perform this rite, in memory of Me.” You will notice also, that when He identifies the Eucharistic Bread with His body, He is careful, according to all the witnesses, to use the clear present tense, “My body which is even now being broken,” or (as another puts it), “being given over to death” for you.

These were strange sayings, my brethren, either senseless or supernatural. But they understood. For they remembered that preliminary lesson which John has recorded in his sixth chapter, for the confirming of this very teaching in a later time, when much was in danger of being forgotten or misbelieved. They remembered—how could they forget it?—when to those cavillers who asked for such a sign as was the manna to their fathers He replied, “*I am the Bread of Life*,” “The bread I will give is *My flesh* ;” and they cried out, “How can this man—this carpenter’s son—give us His flesh to eat?”

But His words beat down on them again, royal, imperative, unyielding. “Moreover, I say to you, except ye *eat the flesh* of the Son of man, ye have no life in you. . . . He that *eateth My flesh* and *drinketh My blood*, *dwelleth in Me* and *I in him*.” And now not the Jews only, but almost all His followers, rebelled. It is a hard saying—who can hear it? “How can we eat His flesh?” Does He retract, or soften, or explain? Nay; but as He had begun by telling them that the work of God was to believe Him that He had sent, so now in this crisis of their faith He asks only for belief again. And many—all but the twelve, it seems—went back and walked with Him no more. Did He say, “Ye have taken a parable too literally”? Did He offer a hidden meaning? He only turned sadly, half wearily, to His twelve and said, “Will ye too go away?” And Peter answered—not, “It is easy;” not, “We understand;” but with a cry of faith, confident through all strange teaching, even as are we Catholics to-day, that the message was Divine—“Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.”

I have said that the writer of the Fourth Gospel omits the words of institution, as being in his day the common knowledge of the Church. But the vast importance which he attaches to the fact is made all the more clear by the wonderful sermon, burning with the Divine Love, and instinct with the idea of the Divine Communion as the root of all the holiness of that new life, which, like the earlier lesson, he alone reports. He wrote somewhere about 100 A.D., long after the Synoptics and the writings of St. Paul. And it is important to notice that the same connection between the idea of the Eucharist with its sacramental communion and the idea of the unity of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ, wherein Christ’s life and love must needs be indwelling, had been also worked out in other forms by the Pauline Epistles.

It is not possible to detail within any reasonable limits the great number of indications to be found in the New Testament as to the continuance by the earliest followers of Christ of a

commemorative rite, in which this "giving of thanks" at the "breaking of the bread" was repeated in an evidently sacramental sense, and as an act of public worship. There is a hint of it even in the story of Emmaus. But immediately after Pentecost we are told that the converts "continued steadfast in the Apostles' doctrine, and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread, and prayer," where evidently this "breaking of bread" is a distinctive note and observance of the Christians. A little later their action is described by saying that they "continued daily with one accord in the Temple" (at their public resort in Solomon's Porch), and "breaking bread from house to house," as each afforded that "upper room" in which they loved to commemorate the Supper of the Lord. In the latter part of the Acts there is more explicit notice of this same observance, as of a public gathering for worship, in the account, plainly given by a fellow-traveller and eye-witness, of St. Paul's visit to Troas. They found there an important community, and the words of the writer give us a graphic picture. He describes the upper chamber, with its many lights. He says that on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together for the breaking of bread (apparently now a technical phrase), Paul preached to them, and, intending to depart on the morrow, he continued his discourse till midnight. Then, after describing the accident and the healing, which, was the occasion of the narrative, he goes straight on: "And having come up again, and having broken bread and eaten, and having conversed with them till the dawn, Paul departed."

Now it is plain to any impartial reader of this narrative who knows anything of the other evidences concerning the early Church, that this was a public Sunday service in commemoration of the Supper of the Lord, and that the "breaking of bread" was the characteristic central act, to which St. Paul's sermon was leading up, and which, after the startling interruption, he completed in due form.

Apart from any question of biblical inspiration, it is not possible to escape from the clear meaning (as a matter of history) of certain passages of the Epistles, such as the tenth and eleventh chapters of the first letter to the Corinthians, admittedly one of the earliest documents of the Church. It is a sermon against certain laxities, first as to the Temple meats, and then as to the misuse of the "Agape," the Love Feast, combined, as is well known, with the special celebration of the Supper. The whole passage is charged with forms of expression and turns of thought which evidently refer to the sacramental conception of the Mass as we hold it now. After recalling those types of the sacraments of Christianity which he found in the history of his own people, he tells his

followers, as the very reason why they may not be partakers of the table of the heathen gods, that they are already partakers of "that one Bread"—"the bread which we break," as he calls it—"which is the communion of the body of Christ." That "bread" is *their* sacred sacrifice, and they dare not hold it so lightly as to let it be supposed that the heathen travesty of sacrifice to Aphrodite and the rest was otherwise than an abhorrence in their eyes.

In the eleventh chapter he is still more explicit. His warrant for complaining of such unseemly things as happened when they "came together for the eating of the Lord's Supper" is no other (as he tells them) than the *very words* of Christ's institution, which he repeats in full. "I have, received of the Lord that which I delivered unto you, that the same night in which He was betrayed He took bread, and when He had given thanks He brake it, and said, Take, eat, this My body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of Me." He tells them in plain words that "as often as they eat this bread and drink this cup they are showing forth the death of the Lord," and he warns them that if they take part therein "unworthily"—if each man does not first prove, examine, assay himself, to see that he is void of grave offence, and "so eat that bread"—then they shall be "guilty of the body and blood of the Lord," and it shall bring the uttermost judgments upon them.

I can only indicate the Pauline argument, but every line and word of it strengthens the conclusion that he is referring to an Apostolic antitype of our office of the Mass, and to nothing else. Less distinctly, but with equal truth, the same thing may be said of the argument of the unique Epistle to the Hebrews, of which the keynote is the insistence on the "priesthood according to the order of Melchisedek," who offered the bread and wine. I venture to affirm that if there were no other historic testimony for the Mass than that which is to be found within the canon of the New Testament, it would be enough. We do not find any direct account of the liturgical form. The texts we have do not deal with such matters. Yet, even as to this, there is in the same passage of the Corinthians a significant phrase. The graver abuses he has attacked they will themselves, he is confident, put away; "the rest," he adds, "I will myself *put in order* when I come." He will regulate, he means, the manner of their observance, that all things may be done, as Clement put it, "decently and in order." We cannot, in the face of the surrounding evidence, doubt that such a settled order did arise. There is thought to be further reference to it in the second chapter to Timothy, and in parts of the Book of the Revelation. It has even been plausibly maintained by some

of the best scholars that at least one passage in the Epistles is itself a quotation from one of the ancient liturgies.

I alluded in my former address to the remarkable evidence which is afforded by the comparison of the ancient liturgies themselves, and by the concurrent testimony of the earliest writings. Before I revert to that subject now, I think it will be well that I should attempt to state in a few words what the Mass in fact contains.

Reverting to the historical side of the subject, it now becomes needful to refer to the address delivered some months ago, when I had not thought that I should be asked to devote a separate paper to this special aspect of the Catholic tradition. Had I foreseen any such opportunity, I should perhaps have reserved the general sketch I then set before you. But in view of the account now given of the actual contents and character of the Liturgy, it will not be amiss if, without unnecessary repetition, I direct attention in a more special way to the cogency of the arguments from critical and historical data, on which we hold that it is impossible to ascribe to the Catholic beliefs and usages in the Mass any later origin than the recorded ordinance of Christ.

I have urged that the biblical arguments are striking. But to the critical student of Christianity, the books which the early Church included in the canon are not necessarily more authentic than other early documents extant. From the latter part of the first down to the beginning of the fourth century we have a chain of writers differing widely in nationality and character, and writing about many different subjects. My proposition is that no fair reader can collate their numerous utterances which bear on the central service of the Christian Church as they knew it without admitting that it was in all essentials the same thing as the Mass I have described, of course in a less developed form.

I will not repeat what I said before as to the consensus of the early rites, though that is, in truth, the most striking argument of all. But I will just refer you to a few remarkable facts about the liturgies themselves, which point very strongly to the Apostolic age.

It is known that the ritual texts were not committed to writing till the fourth century. St. Basil, when he wrote out his own liturgy, was himself struck, as he indicates, by the singular fact that, at the most vital and most carefully guarded portion of the office,—the words of institution,—the liturgical tradition did *not* follow the written texts of the Gospels and Epistles which had for centuries been the common possession of the Church. He explains that in that matter the Church had not referred herself to the written words, because "there are many points most impor-

tant for the mystery which we receive (from the Apostles) by unwritten tradition, in addition to those which the Gospels relate."

And even if we had not his weighty testimony, it is very plain, on a mere comparison of the texts, that in spite of their necessary veneration for and dependence on the origin and charter of the rite, no one of the ancient types followed the formula of any Gospel. Evidently they claimed for themselves a co-equal or even a superior authority, as regards the events of that momentous Supper.

It comes out in many ways. The liturgy of St. James, which is probably the nearest of all we possess to the archetype, gives us the words *in the first person*, meaning apparently that James himself is speaking. The texts of the Gospels vary as to whether Christ spoke of "My body which is broken," or "My body which is given." The liturgy of St. James vouches that He said *both*. Almost all the rites are particular to say that when He invoked the Eucharistic blessing Christ "raised His eyes to heaven"—not to be found in the Bible—and apparently therefore a traditional detail. But the most curious fact is that practically all the rites concur in the ceremony of "mixing water with the wine"—of which there is no word in the Bible. Their tradition as to this detail of Christ's action was so strong that they regarded it as an essential part of the rubric of the commemoration. And St. Cyprian, discussing (not long after, A.D. 200) this very question of form, asserts that he upheld it because it was the tradition of the Apostles as to that act of Christ which they were commanded to repeat.

Now, as I have before proved, such matters cannot conceivably have been copied by any one of the liturgical families from another. There is no common centre, after the Apostles, on which they can be supposed to converge. If then such minute matters were preserved and handed down concurrently in each, they can have come only from the scrupulous care of those who saw and heard the great act, and themselves directed the manner of its commemoration.

As for early testimonies, they come to us from every side. Pliny's inept account to Trajan of the worship of the despised sect confirms, as do all the other Roman travesties, the internal and very accurate account we have from Justin Martyr. Pliny uses the word "sacrament," though he does not know its meaning. Justin even uses the word "sacrifice."

Irenæus is not very far removed from the Apostles, and his writings teem with allusions to the doctrine of the Real Presence; but he gives us even a stronger piece of evidence than his own,



for he tells us in distinct and very technical terms how the heretic Marcus, whom he was attacking, had himself retained, though in a perverted form, the Mass and the Real Presence, so that he professed to make the wine show as red blood in the cup after his words of invocation. Why should a heretic of the second century have carried away these things, even in his revolt, if they were not then one of the essentials of the Apostolic faith?

I mentioned before the minute account of the then ritual of Jerusalem in the catechism of Cyril, written about 350; and I cannot now dwell, as I would wish to do, on the extraordinary strength of the argument as to the antiquity even of the minutiae of the office I have described, which we derive from this and from the far earlier account of Justin. Even in the Mass known to the latter—not long after 100—we can distinguish the Entrance, the Offertory, the Preface, the Eucharistic Prayer, and the Formula of Institution, the Exclusion of the Catechumens, the Communion of the presiding priest and of the people, and the explicit doctrine of the Real Presence. What stronger evidence need we require to prove that the tenor of the Mass was in existence, as the accepted Christian ritual, a few years after the death of John?

One further point I would wish to mention, and with it I will leave this argument. I have mentioned the Prayer of the Great Intercession. St. Cyril, in 347, refers to it, and he mentions a number of topics which it then embraced. All these, as a matter of fact, are found in every one of the Liturgies. But that form of prayer has lately been found, by a fortunate accident, to be far older than Cyril. Clement of Rome, who is named by St. Paul in the unquestioned Epistles, and who was undoubtedly in authority at Rome soon afterwards, wrote several Epistles and other things which were not included in the Canon, though they are probably more ancient than some parts of it. Certain fragments of one of these which was lost have recently been recovered; and these are found to contain an extract from this very portion of the Liturgy, which, therefore, was then in use and honour. Their wording is found to be the same, so far as it goes, as that which is preserved to us in the texts of the Liturgy used at Alexandria, and ascribed to the tradition of the Evangelist St. Mark. Here then is a witness that cannot be tampered with; and the voice of this fragment, buried for near eighteen centuries, joins with all the other voices in proclaiming that the Liturgy of to-day is as old as the Apostles.

So far I have been seeking to make clear to you the basis, the tenor, and the history of the Mass.

To each of the great institutions of the world there belongs a philosophy, a group of antecedent ideas which it pre-supposes,

embodies, and translates into the actualities of life; and a utility, a range of ends subserved, a scope of human needs fulfilled, a tale of the world's work done. In the former, the critical thinker will seek the inner logic of the historic fact. By the latter, the practical man will appraise, too often rashly, the right of that which is to be preserved.

Let me ask then at once, what is the philosophy of religion which underlies and is involved in the unique institution with which I have to deal?

The fact of knowledge, the existence of ethics, the possibility of political or social life,—all these involve, as all who are familiar with Kant's fundamental arguments will allow, certain ideas as the antecedent conditions of their possibility. So also does the existence of religion. I do not seek, however, to analyze religion; I can only ask you, for purposes of elucidation, to permit me to set out at once those broad general ideas which are here implied in that expression of religion with which I have to deal.

Of these, I distinguish four: *the need of prayer, the fitness of worship, the craving for a Divine communion*, and, above all, *the realization of the personal presence of God*.

These form what I may call the abstract basis of the Mass, apart from that dogmatic aspect of it which I have already referred to as the public profession of a Catholic faith, the commemoration of the death of Christ, the fulfilment of His last behest, and the mystical renewal of His sacrifice.

You will see, I hope, that the four ideas I have referred to arise out of the very essential character of religion, as distinguished, for example, from ethics or from poetry. Ethics is the side of life on which I stand related to an abstract, imperative, rigid law, a pitiless, infinite yea or nay. Poetry—indeed, art in general—is that phase of life in which I stand related to an infinite beauty, revealed in endless subtleties of unexpressed suggestion; an infinite that evades us as we grasp it, a truth that is so vague and unconfined that it is very hard to say when it *is* true.

Religion also is a relation between the finite self and the infinite, but it is distinguished pre-eminently in this, that for it the relation is always and above all things a *personal* one. That the attribution to infinite being of all that we mean, in any positive sense, by personality, is involved not only in ethics but even in knowledge and all else, is capable, I am certain, of strict proof. But neither in the intellectual nor in the ethical side of things is the *personality* of the infinite the prominent note. In the religion of *intellectual life*, the infinite is *truth*; in the *arts* it is *beauty*; in the *ethical* world, it is *law*; but in *religion*, beyond and above all else, it is *love*. Knowledge may imply a

knower, and law may presuppose a lawgiver. But love cannot even be stated or thought of but as the love of one person for another.

In this we touch the beating heart of the universe. Unless you are audacious enough to seriously say that all the religion of the human centuries is a mere delusion and a dream, then we may appeal to the mere existence of religion as a fact of life in proof that the infinite distances are not a silent void, that in the tideless reaches of the past the seeing eye would find, not the blind onset of an iron fate, but the personal tending of a tireless care, and that the shut portals of the future shall disclose not death, but the living God.

If, then, religion presupposes and indeed *means* a personal relation between my personal self and a personal God, this relation must be evidently common to all men; and in every age, accordingly, it has presented itself in public as well as in private forms. By all kinds of men it seems to have been felt that public assemblies for religious observance were a natural need. What then should such a sacred office imply? I contend that, by the very necessity of the case, it must imply exactly those great elements which I have already named as essential points for every Catholic Mass. Each of these, therefore, I will ask you to consider with me for a moment.

It must involve the element of *prayer*. If there were no such thing as prayer, religion would be an idle sentiment—indeed, a mockery. If I stand face to face across the universe of things with another Person who cares for me infinitely, and whose power is limitless, I will surely cry to Him in my need. Some access, some way of intercourse, is involved in the very thought of such a Godhead. We speak to Him and He will hear us. But there are those who ask, How can He answer? and they tell us that the course of things is fixed by a beneficent and unswerving law. No one denies the cosmic order, nor the sequences of cause and effect. I am not talking of any such thing as praying for a miracle, nor do I need even to discuss whether there be such things: for there is scope enough for God's answer to our prayer without violence to any of the so-called laws which are the fetish of the lesser sort of scientific men. You do not prove by pointing us to causes and events that Providence must stand aside and see the cruel wheels go round. I venture to say you will prove nothing against a rational belief in prayer until you go the whole irrational range of pure materialism, and deny all freedom of human action as well as of the Divine. Are any of you prepared to say the universe is but a gigantic mechanism? If you think you are, let me remind you that the theory will do more than

just destroy religion. It will end at once all ethics, all effort, all ideals. It will reduce consciousness to a mockery, spirituality to a dream, and love to a chemical attraction; and, after all, it will have explained nothing, but rather rendered everything insoluble.

No such wild hypothesis can be rationally described as the result of science; and, consistently with all we do know, I repeat that there is ample scope for our belief. In the first place, we know, as clearly as we know anything, that our action is every instant changing, sometimes on issues of enormous moment, the natural trend of the forces about us. A ship is driving on a lee shore. To a savage eye her wreck is an obvious inference from law. But a man's will, by a power of selection and adaptation simple enough to us, can turn the very engines of destruction into the servants of his design. So can God, we say, upon His greater plane.

Again, a thing of daily experience for us, as between the human lives we know, is the fact of influence. Exactly how the personality of a man or woman acts on other lives, we cannot pretend to say. But friendship and love, hate and help, rivalry and discipleship, we have all seen to spring into being, sometimes in a moment, for a mere nothing, a casual meeting, a passing word. A trick of feature, some subtlety of voice, or a so-called personal magnetism yet more impalpable, may bind as by a spell not only individuals but mighty masses of men. We see such things among ourselves. When we pray God for light and growth, for purity and healing, for help and hope and holiness, why shall not *He* act also in such ways of influence, in His far wider way?

We pray, then, in the Mass, as the Church has always prayed, for our own needs and for all the world's, in due obedience to the will of God. The element of general prayer—the great intercession—is, indeed, one of the main factors of that archetype of all the liturgies for which we claim an apostolic origin. Not only is it present in all the five great families, but its very tenor is in all of them the same, and in all it is connected closely with the central act—the repetition of the sacramental words. In all it takes the double form of a prayer, first, for all the living, and then for all the dead; for to us they are all members of that body of Christ, which is the Church. To us the life beyond the grave is not a fatal alternative of instant heaven or hopeless misery, with no world of growth and preparation set between. If by prayer we can help our brethren whom we see, then we believe that by prayer, if God will, we may help also our brethren who have gone before us—out of sight, indeed, but not beyond our reach; for they also are but another of the folds of God.

It is this great intercession which has survived in most of the Protestant religious services under one form or another; though

in these its great significance as a witness to the idea of the solidarity of all the Church on earth and in the other world has, for some strange reason, been destroyed. But it is not on this venerable formula alone that Catholics rely for the element of prayer. In the Mass the ritual words are but the guides, and not the fetters of devotion. The whole course of the office is to the devout Catholic one long occasion for prayer. It is made intense and living by the solemnity of the action. It is assuredly not chilled, but rather constantly upheld, by the familiar form and ceremonial. Every movement of the priest and his attendants, every time a bell is rung or a salutation or response is heard, is but another warning to pray—eagerly, keenly, ceaselessly—using the moments well, for now is the acceptable time. The Mass has hardly begun when the Collects summon all to offer their prayers for the good estate of Christendom, for these are the *gathered prayers* of all the brethren. After the Creed, the offertory warns us to present our lives as a living sacrifice before the Lord, and to pray for all our personal needs. The ceremony of the “Lavabo” bids us pray for purity of heart and forgiveness of our remembered sins. Presently there are the so-called “secret” prayers of the priest, where we bethink us of our hidden necessities. We join in the great intercession, and we are taught to make therein a special mention of every personal friend, and every individual soul, in life or death, for whom, by any personal reason, we are moved to pray. Presently, raising his voice, the priest cries, “And to us sinners also.” It is a call to his hearers that they should turn again to ask of God the helps that, in their sin, they need. A few moments more and you will hear again the lifted voice reciting the ancient formula with which the Lord’s Prayer is ushered in; and all will follow it, for it is said aloud; and all will answer at the closing words, and join in that echo of them which comes after in the prayer against temptation. The “Agnus Dei” is yet another summons, and its cry for mercy, for acceptance, and for peace is echoed in its turn by the beautiful prayer for the peace of the Church, which leads on to the Communion. That past, there follow prayers of thanksgiving, and the Mass is closed.

Anyone is free, of course, to read the ritual words with scrupulous observance, and if it be helpful to his personal devotion he does well; but everyone is likewise free and is advised to adapt this course and movement of the ritual to his own soul’s wants, and to his own best methods of spiritual expression. Therefore the Mass is never rigid, cold, inert, as other rites have been where ritual was the beginning and the end. The whole great company of worshippers in a Catholic cathedral are doing but one thing—they are joining, and they feel themselves to be joining,

in one and the same great act; and yet at the same moment everyone is standing face to face in instant personal relation with the presence of God.

If it were possible I would have wished to indicate to you a few of the many common plans for individual prayer, called "Methods of hearing Mass," which are to be found in our various books. But prayer is not the only phase of that personal relation which religion means, and I must pass now to another form of it at least as universal. No one can deny the constant recurrence in human history of the idea of "*worship*"—that homage paid to the infinite Lord which we commemorate in the common use of language when we describe our religious office as "Divine service."

If it be true that religion means a relation of person to person, it is also evident that that relation does not imply any equality of rights such as we expect, rightly or wrongly, in the human relations we know. Freedom of one individual as against another we assume, and rightly, in our human conduct. For every assertion of a right to make me alter my own course for your advantage or desire must prove itself or be denied. Until you can show good reason to the contrary, I am among men my own master, and, in right of my mere manhood, equal comrade of every man who breathes. But as between any man and the Divine, how vast, how ineffable, is the difference!

I observe that in the post-Reformation systems of thought, and above all in those American new departures of which Emerson and Walt Whitman are the true exponents, there is a strong tendency to suggest that there is something base and servile in the acknowledgment of any dependence of a human person—even upon the Divine. Some of these people talk as if they might shake hands with God; others as if it were a fine thing to shake their fists at Him. One of the most brilliant, and as I fear most subtly mischievous, expositions of this kind of human pride is to be found in Emerson's remarkable Essay on Self-reliance. Yet what utter nonsense it all is! One is tempted to cry out, like the sour sage, "How God must laugh, if such a thing could be, to see His wondrous manikins below!" If we are in fact face to face with a personality which is not one among other equal selves, but infinite—a self as against whom neither right nor duty can be predicated at all—a self without any possible selfishness, for whom all conceivable limitations are but as an idle fancy, and every imaginable power but as the lightest motion of His will—then our self-assertion as against such an one is a mere insanity. All ultimate goodness is and can be nothing but the adjustment of our personal volition to the standard of that one

effectual will. If then revolt can be nothing in the end but self-destruction, it is merely ludicrous to enquire whether our human dignity is injured by the act of adoration. As from Him we derive our being, it cannot be false to say He is our Lord. If there be any sense in which we can talk of justice entering into so unequal a relation, it is most just that we should do Him service.

The best reason for it, of course, is not that it is His due—for our refusal will hardly make Him poorer. As with prayer, so with worship also—it is for *our* sakes that we must lift our hearts to Him. It is exactly because the emptiness of human folly is prone to raise itself against the Master; it is because pride, rebellion, swollen insolence, are possible, that it is well we should remind ourselves of that eternal infinite disparity, and bow down and bend the knee. Not even of purity or truth did Christ so strongly speak as of humility, meekness, lowliness of heart.

Not that there are not forms of self-reliance and respect which are wholesome and honourable, nay, even needful for the perfect service of our God. If each man revered himself to every height consistent with all other reverence the world would be quickly purified. It is against the self-insistence in the face of the Divine that we protest. Because to set up our will against the holy will is the very mark of sin, therefore to worship is of the essence of religion.

I have seen the stout burghers of a Dutch town, assembled in their Groote Kerk, marching about with hats on, talking sturdily, to show that they disclaimed all figments of a reverent bearing. If their manner did not belie them, they were minded, I fear, to obey no more and no farther than they chose. To say that is to say they were independent centres of action in the universe: and these, like independent centres in our own or any other organization, are in fact a disease, and must work out their own elimination.

I fear that not a little of the common prejudice of a certain robust type of Englishman against the Catholic religion arises out of such a distaste as these Dutchmen, or as the typical John Bull of the past, would certainly have felt for anything in the way of worship which involved any very obvious abasement before a higher power. To the Catholic mind this is not dignity, but a monstrous littleness of soul. To us the acknowledgment of our dependence upon the Father as those "little children" of whom Christ spoke is a good and a beautiful thing. We believe that they who in this sense are "poor in spirit" are "blessed," as the Master said; we confess our nothingness in the face of the Almighty love, not grudgingly but joyously; and every time that

we are privileged to assist at the offering of the Mass, we rejoice in it as in a special and most fitting opportunity for the act of adoration.

It is to this ruling idea of worship that all our formal usages refer: a kneeling posture, a reverent demeanour; and all such symbols as the offering of incense, or of flowers and other precious things about the altar, which we think of as His throne. They are but poor attempts after the expression of that sense of reverence which it is surely our interest not to lose. Ruskin said once that "in reverence lies the chief joy and power of life." The lack of it in the modern world is an evil deeper than we know. If you abolish the fashion and semblance of reverent worship in religion, where else will it survive?

Apart from symbolism, the note of worship is continued, throughout the whole office, by the constant recurrence of the poetic expression of the Divine praise. The hymn of the Nativity, "Glory to God in the highest;" the hymn of the Trinity, which we call the "Preface," with the "Holy, holy," that follows it, are in fact the earliest Christian poetry. Other psalms and chants of the like intent were added, as the devotional sentiment of the various churches ruled. You may think it is unmeaning that men should "praise God;" and so it would be if it were not that spontaneous expression of our gladness in His perfect majesty which is but the translating of our adoration into words. Your blustering burgher chanting formal psalms may be but "a sounding brass;" but the humble soul, who for the pure delight of thinking upon God must needs proclaim His glory, is but joining, as our own Preface puts it, in the Heavenly Song.

There is yet another sense in which the Mass is charged with an intense adoration, such as must often amaze an earnest stranger. As the action rises towards its culminating point, you cannot fail to notice how the signs of waywardness, or vanity, or inattention gradually cease. Those who have been sitting, kneel—those who have been reading lay their brows upon their hands to pray. And when the warning bell has rung, there is throughout a Catholic Church an intense silence, a rapt devotion, such as I, at least, have never elsewhere seen. It is in that moment that you may see how reverence alone can solemnize and glorify the trivialities of life. From the squalid warrens of the poor, from the sordid worries of the middle class, from the idle vanities of fashion, they are gathered together—as of old—for the breaking of the bread. They have come to pay their service to that Majesty before whom all differences fade. And as the great words are said, the great act done, they are rapt beyond the little things about their feet, and are forced to look up, if it be but for



a moment, at the mighty things that are eternal. In that great moment, even the least of His little ones may be glorified by the solemnity and the enthusiasm of adoration. The inspiration of high poetry and of glorious music is a noble thing, but for us there is a way of nobler inspiration open to the dull and the unlearned at least as readily as to the wise whenever Mass is said.

The third idea which I set before you is the need of a *Divine Communion*. I know not, indeed, how I may express to you with any clearness what to us that word conveys. I have said that the idea of prayer—the access from our side to God—is inherent in the very conception of a personal relation between the Finite and the Infinite. If that is one side, Communion is the other. The sense of our dependence, which we express as worship, is not inconsistent, to the Christian, with the belief that in another sense, transcending our imagination, we may yet be made one with the Divine. If you will read the intense chapters at the end of John's Gospel, or if you read any of the great books of religious utterance, such as the "Imitation," you will see that the sense of the Divine Love cannot remain for the religious soul a merely intellectual proposition. "Whosoever eateth My flesh abideth in Me, and I in Him." "That they may be one as we are one; I in them and Thou in Me,"—such phrases, commonly described as mystical, are reiterated over and over again. And in the passion of the Son of God, the great writers of the Church have delighted to talk of dying to themselves and to all earthly things that they may be the more lost in their Beloved.

These things are of personal experience, and to those who are without they will seem nothing. I desire now only to point out that the personal relation of each finite self to the Infinite Self of which I began by speaking cannot be otherwise thought of than as a union of love; whatever in the marvels of the Infinite such love may mean. This love, not merely of man for God, but of God for man, is of the essence of the Christian, as indeed of any, religion. Now of love itself, in any phase of it, what can we say? We have said and sung an infinite deal about it; but we can say little more than that it is a union of two souls, wherein in some sense their personal interests have fallen away so that they are to each another no longer alien, but as one. What, then, would such love be, if it could transcend our limits and be taken up into the Divine? We could not, apart from any revelation, have professed to say; but we may say without unreason that in such a conception we have a key at least to some of the aspects of the sacramental and mystic conceptions of the Divine Communion; of an Infinite Love, who gives Himself to us, whose delight

it is to dwell with us, whose yearning is for our answering love, who makes Himself like to our lowliness that He may reach us and draw us to Himself; who can indeed, if we will love Him, be one with us and yet our God, as we can indeed be lost in Him and yet be none the less the personal selves He made.

I cannot pretend to tell you, even remotely, of that hidden wisdom of the spiritual experience. None of you who have read the lives and writings of the Saints can doubt that it exists, and that they who have expressed it were uttering the most sacred truths they knew, for the truth of which they would have counted it a joy to die. You may think they are deceived, but that intense belief is a tremendous fact of our humanity, and has had and still has its immense results. There is, however, you explain it, a human craving for such oneness with the far-off Infinite; and in the Mass it has found, among all manner of men, its full and abiding satisfaction. The idea of such communion is, as you already know, inherent in its earliest plan, as it was the main idea of the Last Supper itself. In early times, the actual reception of the Sacramental Communion by all present was the usual custom; but at an early date, for various reasons, that ceased to be expected. Nevertheless, so strongly is this side of the Mass insisted on that you will find that all our books of devotion exhort the hearer, if he is not prepared for the actual reception of the Eucharist, to make at that part of the Mass the meditations and exercises which are known as a *Spiritual Communion*—that he may thereby take unto himself, if not the sacramental fullness of the Divine Love, at least so much of the sense and effect of that union with the present God as in his duller spiritual state he may.

The three ideas to which I have now sought to direct your<sup>\*</sup> attention are, however, all dominated by the last, which contains in itself the wide and fundamental distinction between the Mass and every other form of the public worship of God. I have called it *the realization of the presence of God*.

To all who believe in God He must of logical necessity be, in some sense, always present. But when Christ said that "where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them," He was referring to the evident fact that for the human consciousness there may and must be a special presence of God, on those occasions when His children come before Him. Here, as so often in the Catholic Creed, we come upon the note of human solidarity. God is present to any religious soul; but where the brethren are gathered together—where the collective life of the Christian society is manifested—there He is, so to say, more fully present, and more near. It is good to pray

alone, and to lift up the silent worship of the heart; but it is better, it is indeed a duty, to come forth and join with others in a social act of worship, in a common prayer for all the common need. For the Church of Christ is above all things an organic community, wherein none are isolated, none rejected, none sent empty away. The representative office of the Priest, offering the Mass in the name of all the people, absent as well as present, dead as well as alive, is itself the sign and token of this corporate character. The congregation—each particular *ἐκκλησία*—is but the representative of all the Church; and to each there comes, as we believe, the real presence of that Lord who has called the Church His bride.

It is not enough that one should know, as an intellectual proposition, that God is here. It is of much more consequence that one should realize it—that His personal nearness should be brought home to one's heart. We may know that a close friend is not far off, but that knowledge has on us a very different effect from the sound of a well-known step, and the hearing of a long-remembered voice. Now the one thing which, above all else, I venture here to claim for the great office of the Catholic Church is, that it brings home to us the vivid, palpable sense of "God with man."

At this point, however, the subject passes out beyond my reach. I have more than occupied the space of time appointed to me. And I could not hope, even if I delayed you far longer, to bring home to you what is meant in the spiritual experience of the Catholic world by the Sacramental Presence. There are some things which it is not granted to man to utter, at least in the ordinary ways of speech.

I will close, therefore, by pointing you for a moment to an entirely different, but not alien, aspect of the great office of the Church.

It has many forms and many uses; but in such a world as that we live in there is one great use which should not be forgotten. It may clothe itself in the simplest surroundings and yet do all its work for men. But in the ancient ritual and the ceremonial tradition there is an opportunity which the Church has always gladly used, clothing upon it all the glory of architecture and of music, all the wealth of colour and of precious things which the devotion of the servants of God can offer in the highest act of their worship. You know, my friends, what an infinite impulse this very desire to glorify the place and the occasion in which the Lord came to His people has been to Art in all the Catholic centuries. Until some such religious fervour comes again, your Art will strive but slowly. Do not say: "To what purpose is this

waste?" That which in the service of God is used to make more glorious the common worship of the people is one of the best gifts that can be given to God's poor. In many parts of the East End of London, as a Protestant observer lately said, there is no place of light and beauty but the Catholic Church. And what higher work can art and beauty do than that of the handmaid of a religion which is itself the solace and inspiration of the poor? If I could go on to tell you what we know of the human uses which this office serves, I should have much to say of its utility for many kinds of men. But it is to the poor, whom He most loved on earth, that the fullest advantage of His great commemoration comes. You may do much for social conditions—you may redress much injustice and open many avenues of success; but nothing you can do will compensate those who bear the misery of the world for what they will lose if you deprive them of a living religion, and of that great public act in which all that is hard in human conditions needs must fall away, and in which all that is glorious in human wealth is taken up into the glory of the Divine.

## THE NEW CHURCH, COMMONLY CALLED SWEDENBORGIAN.

BY THE REV. THOMAS CHILD.

It may be asked, "Have we not enough of Churches, and why another one calling itself the New Church?" Well, there never was a new movement which did not begin as a Church; the more secular fraternities of the politician and the reformer are to them as Churches are in religious matters. And as regards the New Church our claim is that it explains the problems which have so long vexed mankind.

Turning then *first* to the Philosophical Aspect of New Church teaching, our primary attitude is not *things as they are*, but *my relation to them*; not, "Do things exist?" but, "What must I, as a rational human being, from the constitution and laws of my nature, believe?" Not primarily whether my belief is answered or matched by existing things, but, "What is it that I am constituted, and thus that reason compels me, to believe?" This is our starting-point. The facts of human nature are the best interpreters of man; if we come down to them and let them speak for themselves, we shall get clear and explicit answers. But men seldom allow reason, as such, to speak, or the facts of their own nature to declare, as they would with unmistakable voice, the things that are true for it, and which that nature is bound, because constituted, to believe. Primarily, for example, I am not concerned with whether God exists, but with whether I ought to believe that God exists as the outcome of my constitution. Afterwards, the question may come as to whether my conception answers to the facts. You may always be sure, however, that what a man acknowledges himself as bound to believe, he will equally declare to be an existing fact. Man then must have a creed, because he has a nature; he has a right to know what his nature can tell him, and he is bound to follow its teachings, whatever they be and wherever they lead him.

Materialists say: "Some things we know. We know that man is matter. We don't know that he is anything else." But have we a right to assume that, inasmuch as we do not see mind acting without matter, therefore mind is the result of matter?

We have no such right. These two are simply, so far as we can tell, co-existent; and, being so, scientific inquiry should itself prevent us confounding things that differ. Nobody knows, as a matter of fact, that mind comes from matter.

But what is it that constitutes matter or substance? "Qualities! qualities!!" the materialist says. "Destroy a man's organism,—put him in the fire, for instance,—and where is he? What then are these things you call soul, immortality? They are myths. Don't you see that when you destroy the qualities the man is gone, and gone for ever?"

I accept the position. Qualities constitute "things;" and the qualities of a material thing constitute a material thing, and the qualities of an immaterial thing constitute an immaterial thing; and there's the end of it. Take the principle and follow it up, and where does it lead? To spiritual organization. How is that? In this way. The qualities of a stone constitute a stone; of a chair, a chair. Suppose you take the qualities from the chair. How can you do that? Put it in the fire; the chair and its qualities have gone. Of course there is a residue of dust and gas, having qualities of their own; but the point is, whether the destruction of the qualities of any body is not the destruction of the body itself. Reason and fact answer, "Yes." In man there are two forms of substance. "No," says the materialist, "I deny that." Well, look at the facts, so far as reason can show them. Abstractly speaking, immaterial properties or qualities, if there be such, constitute immaterial things, just as material qualities constitute material things. But are there any such qualities as immaterial qualities? Is thought a material quality? Is feeling a material quality? Surely neither thoughts nor feelings are material. They are not subject to the laws of gravity or cohesion; they cannot be weighed nor measured; and they do not admit of being seen, smelt, tasted, heard, or felt. They are, therefore, immaterial properties or qualities, no matter whence they exist as to origin. A series of qualities known as material, constitute material substance; and (we must not hesitate) a series of qualities known as mental, constitute mental substance. Mental and material qualities are side by side in man.

The mental—or, if you do not object, the spiritual—directs the material; the directed matter is the agent, the means by which the mind works here in a material sphere. Man is a spiritual being at work in a material environment. It appears then that the materialistic position is really undermined, and that another position has taken its place. You put it in a nutshell thus: Qualities constitute substance. There are immaterial qualities; therefore there is immaterial substance.

In what way are we to think of the Infinite Cause or God? Our only idea must be anthropomorphic—we cannot help ourselves: in the very nature of the case it must be so. Man is bound to think that God must be as *man* is. Don't you know that if a dog could think of God it would think of Him as a dog, and that a horse would think of Him as a horse? And if you are thinking of God, once more our point is, "What am I, as a human creature, bound to think and believe concerning this Cause, but that He is essentially like me, that He is not less than human—that He is infinitely what I am finitely." Yes, and your reason declares that God *is* like you. You have emotions and feelings; and God has these, has intellect, has energy. God is the origin of man. "God created man in His own image and likeness." It was from an efflux of the Divine nature passing forth to the external world, and fitting there to itself a material organism taken from dust, that man was brought forth.

Is this transcendent? It is rational. Nothing is more transcendent than the simplest facts of life.

Well, but He may not exist after all; it may be only my idea! Trust the idea which your nature impels you to hold, and all else will come right. Be loyal to the facts of reason, and things as they are will not be far from reason's way.

But I hear another voice, which cries, "You say the mind declares for cause, and you lead the mind up to God as the Cause of all. Then what caused God? Is not God caused too?" No, there is a mistake in the reasoning. Sequence is simply succession. Cause is the stoppage of succession, and your idea that God may be caused is really a denial of cause and a reintroduction of sequence. You take nature's idea of sequence, and read it into Cause. In Cause there can be no such succession; there is the beginning of successions. When, therefore, man declares that there is a cause of these successions, the last for him has been reached; and he cannot now, to be true to his nature and reason, apply the law of succession to the Cause, for therein he will be denying what he has already affirmed.

Men have had religion after its kind; and now men have science after its kind; but the two must go together, if there is to be any religion or science worth the name. What evidence, then, does the scientist demand for the knowledge any man would confer upon him? In brief, the evidence of experience, his own or another's.

Turning now to our *second* point (the Spiritual Aspect of the New Church, that is, the sort of evidence which the New Church presents concerning man's future,—the evidence of the senses), I have not seen into that other world, I cannot let you see it; but

such is the evidence given. The Lord, as we think, when He would unfold heaven to earth, unfolded it, as He must and could only do, through a man prepared for that purpose. He made it known through that man. I know that it is a risky thing to say here, but I am bound to tell you what I believe. Swedenborg, the man I speak of, says: "I have for thirty years been in open communication, by the Lord's mercy, with the spiritual world." And he gives us its laws; and, curiously enough, the facts interpret the laws, and the laws the facts; and a study of these things impresses the mind with the conviction that here there is no crazy enthusiast, but a man of science, prepared through his science, through all the knowledge the world could give him, for this wider emancipation, this opening of thought and knowledge into the interior sphere, that he might bring forth the facts from thence, and make them known. And now they stand in black and white for the men of to-day to read and ponder and comprehend.

The New Church, then, believes that there is a God acting through the spiritual world into the natural world. Where is the spiritual world? It is in the natural world as the soul is in the body; and as the soul is the centre and source of all human activity, so is the spiritual world the source and centre of all natural growth and life. The idea of the spiritual world in the natural world affords a key to much which the *isms* of the day leave out. The mission of Swedenborg was to lay open the spiritual world—the causal world—to our apprehension, so that the world of causes and the world of effects might alike be unfolded to the rational apprehension of humanity. Swedenborg explained the facts and laws of both worlds, and the results are at hand for our study.

*Third.* The Doctrinal Aspects of the New Church. The Bible is not to us as to others. We do not accept it because it is literally true, because the miracles are established, because the prophecy is conclusive. It is not rational that such external things should produce belief, which is an internal matter; it is not rational to perform a miracle to make one believe. Swedenborg has been the means of unfolding this book, the Bible, to us in a way which has never been done before; he says that there is in the books constituting the Scriptures proper—not in all the books which are now bound up with the Bible—a real coherence from one end to the other, and such as could never have been in a merely human construction. Our Church holds the doctrine of the "spiritual sense of the word" which is discerned as men progress from being, spiritually, "big boys" to "grown up men." If revelation was closed ages ago, we are



now "left out in the cold." To the very questions disturbing men now there may be found an answer in the "spiritual sense of the word." [The difference between the literal and the spiritual meaning of Scripture was illustrated by referring to a casket with a beautiful exterior, but the gems which the interior held appeared far more beautiful.] On the lines thus laid down the Bible was provable to be God's book, but on no other lines.

As to the doctrines derived from the Bible, they consider that there is nothing in the Bible to warrant the belief in a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead; that is simply impossible; it is an absurdity, three in one is a thing contrary to reason. A trinity of essentials, however, there may be in God. There is a likeness to this in nature, e.g. from the sun emanates heat, light, and energy; and there is a trinity of powers in man. The New Church considers the Father to be the Divine Love; the Son the Thought and Wisdom by means of which all things proceed; and the Holy Spirit the Energy sustaining all things. It wholly disclaims the ordinary idea of the "Atonement." The Atonement properly means "at-onement," i.e. reconciliation of God and man, not the reconciliation of God to man, but man to God; and this was brought about when God assumed humanity as the Son, and led men from matter to spirit, from death to life. This is an awful thing to say, but the conception possesses rational harmony. The "resurrection of the material body" we do not believe in, inasmuch as when men go into the spiritual world they will never want a material body more. A spiritual substance is inevitably a spiritual body.

*Fourth.* The Practical Aspect of the New Church—which may be summed up in the sentence, "All religion has relation to life, and the life of religion is to do good." That is the practical embodiment of the New Church teaching. It does not deal with mere doctrines, but its motto is, Doctrine in Life.

What must that future religion be that will satisfy man? It must be a union of science and religion. A religion capable of being scientifically proved, because organically, humanly based, is the only religion that the future could possibly accept. And it is because this is exactly true of the New Church throughout her universal grasp of facts and principles, because she can give a rational reason for the facts of life and what she alleges in regard to them, because she meets man wholly and explains him through and through, that she stands out distinctively as the exponent of this new era of the world. If the New Church is not a philosophical and spiritual interpretation of man and his surroundings, it is nothing.

## THE RELIGION OF DANTE.

BY OSCAR BROWNING.

NOTHING is more remarkable than the manner in which the reputation of Dante has developed with the new growth of national life in the kingdom of Italy. There was a time when, although his name was famous, his works were comparatively unread. Tasso was sung by Venetian gondoliers, and shared with the *Promessi Sposi* the honour of being an Italian text-book for studious youth. The knowledge of Dante was confined to the *Inferno*, and in that almost to the two episodes of Francesca da Rimini and Ugolino, the pair of unfortunate lovers who expiated their fault by being borne everlastingly upon a rushing wind; and the father who, murdered by the vengeance of an implacable enemy, fed in his last agony on the bodies of his children, who had died before him.

With the first flush of Italian independence this state of things entirely changed. I was privileged to witness from time to time the marvellous spectacle of the renaissance of Italy. I remember Milan before Magenta, and Verona before Custoza; Milan, when any citizen was liable to be roused from his bed, and imprisoned in a fortress without a trial; and Verona, when it was dangerous to speak seriously except in the open fields. I witnessed the rivalry of Cavour and Garibaldi at Turin, and read in the streets of Parma the half-hourly telegrams which announced the entry of the Italian troops into other marches. As soon as the Press was free it teemed with cheap editions of Dante. They were exposed in every bookshop and kiosk, and were hawked about the streets on trays. The fever spread from Turin to Florence, from Florence to Rome, and from Rome to Naples. Dante was lectured upon to ladies, and taught as a classic in the schools. Undoubtedly this enthusiasm sprang chiefly from political causes. Dante was a Ghibelline—that is, in the great struggle which divided Italy between the party of authority and the party of local independence, he supported the party of authority. He believed in the subordination of the Papacy to the Empire, in the

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presence of a strong ruler who could quell the discordant rivalries of Italian cities, and educe order out of chaos: above all, he believed in the unity of Italy, that great cause which was then in process of consummation. Dante, in his first canto, prophesies of the coming hero, the greyhound who, disregarding the gain of money and territory, is to drive the wolf of the Papacy from city to city until she returns to the hell from which she sprang. It was a favourite conceit, which has not altogether disappeared, that the greyhound—the Veltro—began with the two initials of Victor Emmanuel's name, and that the whole title might run Vittorio Emanuele, Liberatore, Trionfatore, Re Ottimo (Victor Emmanuel, the Liberator, the Triumpher, the Best of Kings).

But Dante has not been without his revival on the religious side. When the leaders of the Oxford movement were leaving the Church of England, which they believed to be corrupt, for the Church of Rome, which they imagined they could purify, they studied Dante as the source of undefiled religion. In him they found, or thought they found, an orthodoxy unimpeached, a faith founded on reason and knowledge, unembittered by the theological disputes which followed the Reformation, and transfused by passionate love of humanity and truth.

What then are the essential characteristics of the religion of Dante? How does Dante deal with what are the three necessary component parts of all religions—Faith, Hope, and Charity; which last more fitly bears the name of Love? These three virtues—the theological virtues as they are sometimes called—are symbolized by a cross, an anchor, and a heart. The heart is symbolical of Charity or Love, but in mediæval Italian sculpture Charity is figured by a woman who has not only her heart but her brain on fire, showing that real love, the true enthusiasm of humanity, must not only inflame the heart with burning zeal, but must set the mind aglow until it disregards the dictates of cool reason. Reason has no place where emotion is the guiding principle. The cross, the symbol of Christianity, represents revealed religion, the dogma which could not be known to us except by a tradition which is apart from and above the effects of human wisdom. There remains the anchor of Hope, that quality which, when the heart and the brain are on fire and the mind is lifted into the region of revealed truth, keeps the soul fixed to a sure and certain anchorage. This was afforded in Dante's case by intellectual knowledge—the knowledge of the world and of the universe, as far as it can be ascertained by human understanding; the realization of the past, the present, and the future of man; the lower life from which he has gradually emerged, the environments which surround and condition his existence, and the

destiny which awaits him. Let us, then, study the religion of Dante under these three aspects. Let us consider in turn: of what nature was his love; what was his knowledge of the world and of man; what was the complexion of his faith; and, lastly, how these three qualities were fused together into a harmonious whole, so as to survive to future ages and influence a distant posterity.

Let us first speak of the origin and character of his love. The name of Dante is inseparable from that of Beatrice. Dante was born at Florence, about the middle of May 1265. He first met Beatrice Portinari, at the house of her father, Folco Portinari, on May-day 1274. In the *Vita Nuova* ("The Young Life"), which gives an account of this absorbing passion, he tells us: "Already nine times after my birth the heaven of light had returned as it were to the same period, when there appeared to my eyes the glorious lady of my mind, who was by many called Beatrice, who knew not what to call her. She had already been so long in this life that already in its time the starry heaven had moved toward the east the twelfth part of a degree, so that she appeared to me about the beginning of her ninth year, and I saw her about the end of my ninth year. Her dress on that day was of a most noble nature, a subdued and goodly crimson, girdled and adorned in such sort as best suited with her tender age. At that moment I saw most truly that the spirit of life, which hath its dwelling in the most secret chamber of the heart, began to tremble so violently that the least pulses of my body shook therewith, and in trembling it said these words: 'Ecce deus fortis me qui veniens domina vitum mihi!' 'Behold a god stronger than I am, who in his coming will have lordship over me!' From that time forth I declare that love had lordship over my soul, which was speedily placed at its disposition, and it began to assume over me such authority by the power which my imagination gave it that I was forced to perform all its behests. Love ordered me many times to take occasion to see this youngest of the angels, so that in my boyhood many a time I went about in search of her, and saw that she had such noble and praiseworthy carriage that certainly it might be said of her the expression of the poet Homer, 'She appeared to be a daughter not of man but of God.' And although the image which always abided with me was the boldness at Love to lord it over me, yet it was of such noble power that at no time did it suffer that Love should guide me without the faithful counsel of reason in these things in which such counsel was useful to listen to."

Another story of a contemporary tells us of this marvellous and absorbing love. Dante, when he has related in the fifth

canto of the *Inferno* the punishments of Francesca da Rimini and her lover, says that the tears they shed at the end of their narrative affected him so deeply that he felt his forces fail as if in death, and fell as a dead body falls. A note in the MS. of Monte Cassino, evidently written by some one who knew Dante, says that this experience befell Dante himself, and that one day, unexpectedly meeting Beatrice on the staircase of a house, he fell suddenly to the ground as if he were dead. Dante lost his father when he was ten years old, and his boyhood and youth for the next eight years were spent in severe study. His next memorable meeting with Beatrice was nine years later, when this marvellous lady appeared to him in a dress of dazzling white. She was accompanied by two older ladies, one on each side, and as she passed Dante in the street she turned her eyes to where he stood full of fear, and, of her ineffable courtesy, saluted him so virtuously that all the blessedness of heaven seemed open to Dante's eyes. This was the first time that he ever heard her speak, and the words came to his ears with such sweetness that he went away as if intoxicated with delight. He then retired to a solitary place in his chamber and set himself to think of that most courteous lady; and as he thought, there came upon him a very sweet sleep, in which there appeared to him a marvellous vision. There appeared to him in his chamber a cloud of the colour of fire, and within this cloud was seen a figure of fearful aspect, who said, with much that Dante did not understand, "I am thy Lord." He bore in his arms the body of Beatrice asleep, wrapped lightly in a blood-coloured cloth. In one of his hands he held a burning heart, the heart of Dante. Gradually the sleeping lady whom he bore awoke, and the Lord of Love forced her to feed on Dante's burning heart, which she did with much hesitation. Then the joy of Love turned to sorrow, and weeping bitterly he went back to the heaven from which he had come, carrying with him the lady in his arms. Folco Portinari, the father of Beatrice, died on the last day of the year 1285. Beatrice only lived four years longer. Shortly before her death Dante had an illness, on the sixth day of which he suffered intolerable agony; and while he reflected—at one time on his weakness, and at another time on Beatrice—it came into his mind that Beatrice also would die some day, and this reflection greatly troubled him. Horrible dreams assailed him, in which women with dishevelled hair cried to him, "You will die," and other strange faces said, "Thou art dead." Then a fiend announced to him that Beatrice was dead, and he thought he saw a multitude of angels bearing her up to heaven with a dazzling cloud in front of them. The vision was so real that

Dante wept bitterly. Beatrice died in very truth at daybreak on June 9th, 1290. In the words of Dante, "The Lord of Justice called that most gentle lady to glory under the banner of that Blessed Queen the Virgin Mary, whose name was in very great reverence in the words of that blessed Beatrice."

From the moment of her death Beatrice becomes more than ever the guide and loadstar of Dante's life. She is so transfused into his studies and his faith that many have supposed that she never really existed, but was a mere abstraction, whereas all the notices of her in the *Vita Nuova*, as well as much in the *Divina Commedia*, prove that she was really a creature of flesh and blood. As I shall show later, she was the stimulus to Dante's studies, and the purifier of his life. A year after Beatrice's death Dante married Gemma de' Donati who bore him seven children. Beatrice was also married at an early age, but their unions did not preclude the deepest spiritual love. Let us trace some of the relations between Beatrice and Dante in the *Divine Comedy*. I need hardly say that this epic poem is the story of the wanderings of Dante through Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise. Vergil, the great poet of Rome, was his guide through the first and second, Beatrice through the third, of these regions. But Beatrice was the moving spirit of the whole journey. Vergil tells him when they first meet at the entrance of Hell how a lady, beautiful and blessed, had called him with eyes brighter than the sun; and how she had told him sweetly and affably, with the voice of an angel, that Dante, her friend, but not the friend of Fortune, was so impeded on the desert stage of life that he was nearly lost. "Help him," she said, "with everything that can assist him, that I may be consoled. Beatrice is my name. Love impelled me to speak to you, and sent me to you; when I return to Heaven I will speak in thy praise to the Lord." Beatrice does not appear herself until the poet and his guide, after passing through the pit of Hell, reach the earthly Paradise on the summit of the hill of Purgatory. Then as the car, which represented the Church Militant, halted with its attendant hosts "in the bosom of a cloud of flowers, thrown by angelic hands, a lady appeared clothed in a green mantle and a flame-coloured dress, with an olive cross over her snow-white veil." Without distinctly seeing who it was, Dante felt the power of the ancient love. The old influence which had pierced him in his childhood now struck him in the eyes, and made him weep. Like a child who runs to his mother in fear or affliction he turned to Vergil, trembling in all his veins, but that sweetest of fathers and best of guides was gone. "Dante," the lady said, "weep not because Vergil is gone; there is

enough to make you weep without that. Look at me well, I am Beatrice; I am Beatrice. How did you dare approach this mountain of blessedness? Did you not know that here man is *happy*?" Dante cast down his eyes in shame. She then relates the story of their spiritual union, addressing the angels which surround them. "Dante," she says, "in his early life was such that he would have given wonderful proof of every righteous action. But the strongest soil if uncultivated often bears the most noxious weeds. For a long time I enchained him with my countenance; and by the light of my youthful eyes I led him in the right way; but when I changed my earthly life for a heavenly he took himself from me and gave himself to another. When my flesh had become spirit, and I was more beautiful, more virtuous, than before, I became less dear and less acceptable to him. He turned his feet on a false way, following vain images. I tried to rescue him by dreams and other means, but they were of no avail; he fell so low that nothing remained but to show him the inhabitants of Hell. For his sake I visited the gate of Hell, and prayed Vergil to lead him hither."

The manner of Dante's ascent through the various circles of Heaven is deeply characteristic of his absorbing devotion. He looks with fixed gaze into the eyes of Beatrice, and, by this power alone, he is raised from the summit of the mount of Purgatory—first into the sphere of fire which lies immediately above it, and then into the heaven of the moon. From this he passes successively into each of the heavens until he reaches the Empyrean. The face of Beatrice, her eyes, and her smile acquire fresh beauty at each ascent, so that when they reach the seventh and last sphere his mortal gaze cannot endure the exceeding light, and he is obliged to find means of tempering it.

In the *Comito*, the philosophical treatise which Dante composed, between the love story of the *Vita Nuova* and the great poem which was the crown of his career, he tells us that Beatrice is the type of Divine wisdom, and that in her face appear things which tell of the pleasures of Paradise, and that the place wherein this appears is in her eyes and smile. For the eyes of wisdom are the two methods of demonstration by which truth is most clearly seen, and the smile of wisdom is the persuasion in which the inner light of wisdom is seen, although under a veil. And in these two things, demonstration and persuasion, is felt that highest pleasure of beatitude which is the greatest good in Paradise. The lines which describe his arrival into this highest heaven are among the most beautiful with which Dante was ever inspired. He says that the remembrance of her sweet smile is as far above the heaven of his mind as the light of the

sun surpasses the weakest eyesight. He has followed her, he tells us in his verse, from the first day that he ever beheld her up to the present moment, but now her beauty transcends all his power of poetic description, for every artist has a limit beyond which he cannot go. He must leave the further praise of her beauty to a louder sound than that of his trumpet. "We issued from the ninth heaven to that heaven which is pure light."

"Light intellectual, full of burning love,  
Love of the very good, full of delight,  
Delight which far transcends all human sweetness"

"Luce intellettuale, piena d'amore,  
Amor di vero ben, pien di letizia,  
Letizia che trascende ogni dolzore."

After Beatrice has explained to Dante the features of the scene on which he gazes, and has concluded with a severe attack on Pope Clement V., she remains silent. Full of amazement he stands gazing at the vast amphitheatre of saints, and the multitude of angels burning with love, quivering flames of fire, their wings of gold, and the rest of them whiter than snow. Like swarms of bees they float up and down from bench to bench of the saints, giving them peace and ardour, mounting as high as the throne of God Himself to rekindle their flames, singing all the time in praise to God, who inspires them with love. Yet amongst this multitude of flying angels, and in spite of the vastness of the distance, Dante can see that all these saints have their faces turned to the central point of all, which is God Himself. He sees the joyousness of their smile, and the energy of their action. His gaze passes now up, now down, along the benches, and by degrees he becomes aware of the general form and constitution of the heavenly Paradise. He turns for a moment to his beloved guide to ask for some explanation, but she is gone. In her place is a venerable old man in glorious attire. This is St. Bernard, the last of the Fathers. Beatrice has mounted to her own individual throne in the heavenly place, and has sent him to conduct the poet to the end. He sees her in the third row from the summit, crowned with the Divine light which is reflected from her face; he sends her loving words of thanks for all the care she has taken in drawing him from slavery to true liberty, and he prays her to continue to protect him until his death. Beatrice looks at him and smiles, and then turns to the central point of light which is the source of all beatitude. The function of Love is over, that of Faith has begun. Love has taught all that the mind can apprehend, what remains can be traced by intuition alone.

Such as I have attempted to describe was the foundation and



the scope of Dante's love. Let us now see what were the grounds of his hope—or, as I have explained it, his conception of the world, of the value of human action, bad and good, and of the destinies which accompany it here and hereafter. To make this intelligible, I must give an account of Dante's cosmogony, his realization of Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven—very distinct and precise, and yet full of symbolism.

Dante regards the world as consisting of two hemispheres—the eastern, in which we live, composed almost entirely of land; the western hemisphere opposite to it almost wholly water. The central point of our hemisphere is Jerusalem, the city in which the great drama of the Incarnation was played and consummated. Things were quite different until the fall of the rebel angels. Lucifer, their leader, driven headlong from heaven, plunged into the earth—the western hemisphere, which was then a continent with the Garden of Eden in its midst. The eastern half was till then shrouded in sea. The West, in horror at what had happened, veiled itself beneath the waves of the East, which left the land there dry. All that then remained in the West was the island of Eden. Lucifer fell into the earth till he reached the centre of gravity, the middle point, from which he could move neither backwards nor forwards. The earth fled before him and left a large pit, the inverted cone of Hell—something like those great diamond-pits in South Africa, of which we see models and pictures—but reaching right down to the centre of the earth. The earth thus displaced rose under the land of the earthly Paradise situated just opposite Jerusalem, lifting it up as on the summit of a mountain, which forms the mountain of Purgatory, up the side of which Dante and his guide Vergil laboriously climbed. The base of this world is surrounded by the sphere of air, subject to the ordinary variations of heat and cold, rain and drought, storm and tempest. Above this is the sphere of fire. The boundaries of these two spheres lie at the dividing line between Purgatory and Antepurgatory, just where the gate, guarded by St. Peter, admits souls stained with sin to the mountain of purification. Beyond these two spheres of air and fire—which, with the earth and water of which the world is composed, form the four elements—lie the nine heavens, each including the others, like hollow revolving spheres or the coats of an onion. The first is the sphere of the moon; everything beneath that is sublunary or of inferior quality. The second heaven is of Mercury, the third of Venus, the fourth of the Sun, which in Dante's time was regarded as a planet, the fifth of Mars, the sixth of Jupiter, and the seventh of Saturn. Outside these comes the *Cielo stellato* (or, the heaven of the fixed stars); outside this again is the *Cielo cris-*

*tallino* (the crystalline heaven)—the *Primum mobile* (the *first moved*) of Milton—itsself, as the widest in circumference, moving with extreme rapidity, the source of the movements of all the other heavens which revolve within it with gradually slackening speed. Yet beyond this is the Empireo (the Empyrean), without motion and without limit, the dwelling-place of God Himself and of His saints. These, as I have before indicated, are arranged in the form of a rose, surrounding a vast and gleaming lake, which is formed by the reflection of the original uncreated light on the edge of the *Primum mobile*, the angels and saints of God. The centre of the rose lies directly opposite to the earthly Jerusalem.

Thus much is necessary to understand Dante's conception of the world and of vice and virtue. We must now give a more particular account of the construction of Hell. This is conceived as a pit in the shape of a tunnel or inverted cone. Just as the circles of Paradise become gradually larger and more intense in happiness as they increase in size, so in Hell the torment becomes more severe as the circles are contracted. The Hell of Dante, like that of Milton, is entered by a gate which is closed to none. It has remained unlocked ever since Christ, after His Crucifixion, forced a passage through it. Over it in dark letters is the following inscription:—

“ Per me si vâ nella città dolente,  
 Per me si va nell' eterno dolore.  
 Per me si va tra la perduta gente.  
 Giustizia move il mio alto fattore,  
 Fecemi la divina Podestate  
 La summa sapienza, e il primo amore.  
 Innanzi a me non fur cose create.  
 Se non eterne, ed io eterno duro .  
 Lasciate ogni speranza voi ch' entrate.”

After passing this gate the wanderers enter into a dreary Ante-Hell, which is bounded by Acheron, the river of woe, the first of the four infernal rivers, counterparts to the four rivers of Paradise; the other three being Styx, Phlegethon, and Cocytus. On this river Charon plies his boat and conveys the souls across. Hell, thus reached, is divided into nine concentric circles, each being a landing-place in the descent, having on one side the wall of solid earth, and on the other the void of the abyss. The first circle is Limbo, of which more anon. At the entrance of the second circle sits the judge Minos. He is furnished with a long tail, and has a peculiar way of pronouncing judgment. Each soul as it comes before him confesses his sins, and Minos, as soon as he has heard them, switches his tail round him with varying degrees of vehemence. The sinner is sent to that circle which is indicated by the number of times that the tail of

Minos encircles his body. The justice of Hell is very speedy. As Dante says in a line which imitates the quickness of the sentence—

*"Dicono, e odono, e poi son già volte."*

Upper Hell consists of the first six circles. Below that is Nether Hell. Below the sixth circle is a fearful chasm exhaling an intolerable stench, in which the monster Minotaur, half-bull, half-man, prowls about; to it leads a terrible and precipitous landslip—made by the earthquake of the Crucifixion. At the foot of this is the seventh circle, divided into three concentric rings. The first of these is formed by Phlegethon, a river of boiling blood. Within this is a wood of living trees, and beyond it a dreary sand waste, rained upon by flakes of fire. Below this again is a void of appalling depth down which Phlegethon dives. Dante and Vergil can only descend by riding on the back of the monster Geryon—with face of man and trunk of serpent, apt emblem of fraud. We now reach the famous Malebolge (or evil pits), huge concentric ditches separated by walls, and connected by bridges of rock, in which different degrees of flame are furnished. After the ten pits of Malebolge we reach another steep descent, that which lies above the ninth and last circle. This is the well of the giants. Nimrod, the Titans, and the other giants stand towering to the height of about seventy feet. Their heads rise far above Malebolge, while their feet rest on the frozen floor of the abyss. Here we reach Cocytus, a stagnant pool, not a river, the pool of Lamentation. The fire is now past, and thick-ribbed ice takes its place. In this lower depth are punished the traitors; the four belts of Cocytus are marked by the names of the most notorious traitors punished in them. *Caïna* contains those who, like Cain, betrayed their nearest kindred; *Antenora* those who, like Antenor, betrayed their country; *Ptolomea* those who, like Ptolemy the Younger, betrayed their friends and guests; and, last of all, *Guidecca*, containing those who, like Judas, betrayed their benefactors and their masters.

We have now reached the centre of the world, the final period of all things, and in this is deeply embedded the monstrous form of Lucifer. He has three faces—that in the centre is red, the right-hand face is yellow, and the left black. Beneath each face two huge bat-wings flap with steady, but ceaseless, motion, causing the icy wind which freezes Cocytus. In the three mouths of Lucifer are crunched the three arch-traitors of the world. Who are they? I doubt if you would ever guess. The central mouth contains Judas Iscariot, the betrayer of Christ, who is not only marked by the teeth, but torn by the claws, of the fallen angel. The two other mouths hold Brutus and Cassius, the murderers of Cæsar.

Thus, in Dante's large and generous survey of the history of the world, are Christ and Cæsar brought together: one, the Founder of the Church and the Suzerain Head of the Vicegerent Power; the other the consummation of humanity, the founder of the Roman Empire, the divine scheme for the order and governance of the world, the origin and suzerain of the holy line of emperors whose sword of justice and power Dante continually invoked to restrain and subdue to harmony the jarring feuds of distracted Italy.

Such is the form of Hell as conceived by Dante. Let us now consider what Dante tells us as to right and wrong, as to the comparative goodness or badness of human actions in this world.

The moment Dante passes the gate of Hell, he enters a place full of strange and horrible sounds, groans, cries, and maimed accents of grief. The dark air is swept by a mighty rushing wind, like the Sahara in a hurricane. Here are the miserable souls of those who lived in the world without blame and without praise, who did neither good nor ill in life. Here are the angels who took no part in the great struggle between God and Lucifer, which stood aside in their own neutrality. They are rejected both by Heaven and Hell. They have no hope of death, their blind life is so degraded that they are envious of the lot of all the rest.

"Fama di loro il mondo esser non lassa,  
Misericordia e giustizia gli sdegna,  
Non ragionam di lor ma guarda e passa."

"No fame of these the world suffers to be,  
Mercy and justice spurn them from their side,  
Take no account of them—gaze and pass on."

How withering the scorn! Dante was bound by his faith to punish them as he had been taught that they are punished. But he has his own standard. Better far the noble mind to suffer anything, the burning marl, the flakes of fire, or the pressure of thick-ribbed ice, than to be borne for ever in the ceaseless storm of wavering purpose, despised alike by God and devils. Two vices Dante hates with a supreme hatred—cowardice and treachery. The dark waste of the *Vigiliacchi* is almost a worse abode than the mouths of Lucifer. The first circle of Hell is *Limbo*, a place of far less torment; it contains the souls of infants who have died too young to commit sin, and unbelievers who have guided their actions only by the light of conscience. They have no definite punishment, they wail not, but only sigh. Their only pain is to live ever in desire without hope. Indeed, many might envy the noble companionship of the souls that dwell there. As Vergil approaches a voice is heard, "*Onorate, l'altissimo poeta!*" and four mighty shades advance to do him honour. These are Homer, Horace, Ovid, and Lucan. Vergil joins their

company, Vergil whose cry soars above them like an eagle. A little farther down, in a luminous spot, stands a noble castle, girt with sevenfold walls, and encircled by a beautiful river. Seven gates give access to the castle court. The seven walls are the seven virtues, and the seven gates are the seven sciences. Here dwell the great ones of olden time: Hector, Æneas, and the great Cæsar, with his eagle eyes; and Saladin seated apart by himself. There is Aristotle, the master of those who know; all admire him and all do him honour; Socrates and Plato are seated by his side; Democritus and Dioscorides; Orpheus, Cicero and Seneca; Euclid and Ptolemy; Avicenna and Averroes. The enthusiasm of the true Dante breaks forth in this description. He must have thought it no evil fate to be one of this chosen company. Although it is part of Hell it is better than many parts of Heaven.

In the next four circles are punished sins of incontinence or want of self-control, each form of it being stamped as worse as we proceed downward. First and least guilty are those who have sinned through excess of love. Dante is always tender to sins of this nature. The teaching of the Church, which places sexual purity above all other virtues, and regards it as the keystone of the good life, excusing all other excesses of the soul if it be sound in this, finds no response in Dante's judgment. Here are Semiramis, Dido and Cleopatra, Helen of Troy and Achilles, Paris and Tristan. Here, too, is Francesca da Rimini, who died by her husband's hand for the slip of one unguarded moment. Ample has this cruel vengeance been redressed by Dante's undying song. Worse than these offenders are the gluttons, drenched by the eternal, cursed, cold, and heavy rain; the misers and the spendthrifts, both equally culpable, throwing huge weights in ceaseless rivalry from one to the other; and worse still are the wrathful and the melancholy—the first tearing each other to pieces and the second buried for ever in the black mud of the hateful Styx. After want of self-control comes what Dante calls bestiality, punished in the sixth circle—the predominance of the material above the spiritual elements in man, the failure to recognize the highest destinies of the individual and the race. Dante tells us in the "Convito": "Among all bestialities that is most stupid, inert, vile, and most hurtful, by which any believes after this life no other life to be." Here, then, we find infidels and heretics. They are placed inside the city of Dis, a cemetery fortified with turrets and walls, garrisoned by demons and guarded by fiends. Inside are tombs heated red-hot by creeping flames, open now, but to be closed at the Day of Judgment. Even here are noble characters. The great Emperor Frederick II., and Farinata degli Uberto, the chivalrous patriot of Florence, who, when as Ghibelline leader he had defeated the Guelphs at

Montaperti and had so returned from banishment, withstood his enraged companions who would have destroyed the city of their birth.

Worse than the two offences of incontinence and materialism is *Malizia*, the pure desire of evil, which affects men in different ways, and from which all other sins proceed. This desire of evil works either by open violence or by secret fraud, and the second is the worse of the two. The seventh circle contains the three categories of the violent: those who have done violence to other men, to themselves, or to God. The circle of the violent is guarded by *Phlegethon*, the river of burning blood. In this river lie the tyrants, the murderers, and the marauders, drowned in the blood for which they thirsted in life, each immersed more deeply according to the depth of his wickedness. The suicides form a dolorous wood, pathless and impenetrable, the trees with knotted and twisted boughs, and dusky leaves bearing thorns which drop poison. The birds are harpies which feed upon the trees and echo the groans which come from them. Thus have those who deprived themselves of life changed their animal to a vegetable body, nor at the Day of Judgment will they resume the human form of which they deprived themselves, but it will be hung on a branch, just as *St. Bartholomew* in *Milan Cathedral* carries his skin upon his arm. Round the wood are those who from *malice* have wasted and destroyed their property, now chased in nakedness, hunted and rent by demon hands. Dante thus adopts as the measure of sin not its outward form but its inward motive. The spendthrifts from incontinence were placed in a higher circle, and were doomed to a less bitter punishment. These wasters of their substance sinned through deliberate malice, and from want of self-control. On a scorched and scorching mud, rained upon by flakes of fire, a region which Dante and his guide do not dare to tread, lie the blasphemous on their backs, among them the rebel *Capaneus*. Here also, punished for another crime, is *Brunetto Latini*, Dante's master. Neither the gravity of his offence nor the severity of punishment prevents Dante from treating him with affection and respect, Conjoined with these, strangely enough, are the usurers, esteemed as breakers of a law of God in nature.

Between the violent and the fraudulent is a deep chasm, down which the fiery blood of *Phlegethon* falls in a cascade. *Geryon*—a monster, as I have said, with face of man and tail of serpent—conducts the travellers down this abyss: a type and embodiment of fraud. It is characteristic of Dante's temper that so large a space of Hell is given to the punishment of fraud, and that it is deemed by him as the blackest of crimes. Still there are gradations in

fraud itself. We may deceive those who have no special ground for trusting us, or we may prove traitors to our kinsmen, our country, or our benefactors. Between these two classes of fraud a great gulf is fixed. Simple fraud is punished in the ten fosses of Malebolge. In the first are seducers of women, Dante, as we have shown above, showing a certain tenderness to offences inspired by love; next to them come the flatterers, and then the simoniacs, who have bartered spiritual gifts for gain, a special place being devoted to simoniacal popes. Diviners, sorcerers, and witches occupy the fourth fosse, the heads twisted round upon their necks so that they look always backward instead of forward. Next to them come the barterers who have sold justice and offices. Then follow the hypocrites, clad in heavy leaden cloaks and hoods, gilt outside with glittering gold. Then follow in their several appointed places thieves, evil counsellors, and breeders of discord. Last of all are falsifiers, divided into several categories, as falsifiers of substance, semblance, and facts. The first are alchemists and coiners, the second those who have assumed the person of another for an evil end, the last malicious liars. The final or ninth circle of Hell contains the traitors as we have already described them. Here is found the well-known form of Count Ugolino della Gherardesca as he gnaws at the head of his treacherous friend Archbishop Ruggieri of Pisa. The story of Ugolino was for a long time, with that of Francesca da Rimini, the best known episode of Dante, and was regarded as the most characteristic type of his genius, the softer and more striking beauties of the Purgatory and the Paradise being left unregarded.

Such is Dante's conception of the actions of the world. Most vile and despicable are the weak creatures who can scarcely be said to live at all, most infamous and most deeply damned is ungrateful treachery. Culpable, yet excusable, is want of self-control, most excusable that want of self-control which comes from excess of love. Strong is the division between sins of weakness and sins of malice, those which spring from weaknesses of will to do what is right, and those which are inspired by the will to do what is wrong.

We have lingered so long over this part of Dante's creed that we have little space left for the description of his faith. He believes the teaching of the Church of his time. Bold and soaring as his spirit is he is not unorthodox. Purgatory, that vague region of theological speculation so difficult to realize or to believe in, is represented by Dante with vivid distinctness. On the terraces of the mountain are punished the seven cardinal sins. The mountain itself is within the sphere of fire; its basement of

craggy rock, rising from the sea, is in the sphere of air, and contains souls who are waiting to cleanse themselves upon the holy hill. Here, too, the sins are classified by the touchstone of Love. Pride, envy, and anger spring from love distorted; sloth (*Accidia*), from love defective; avarice, gluttony, and lasciviousness from love excessive. Here, too, as in the Hell, lust is placed nearest to the earthly Paradise. The connection in Dante's mind between love and knowledge, and between that again and faith, is shown in the beautiful chapter which closes the *Vita Nuova*, the story of his love for Beatrice. He tells how, some time after her death, it was given to him to behold a wonderful vision, in which he saw things which determined him to say nothing further of this blessed lady until such time as he could discourse more worthily of her; "and to this end," he continues, "I labour all I can, as she in truth knoweth. Therefore if it be His pleasure, through whom is the life of all things, that my life continue for a few years, it is my hope that I shall yet write concerning her which hath not before been written of any woman. After the which may it seem unto Him who is the Master of Grace that my spirit should go hence to behold the glory of its lady, to wit of that blessed Beatrice, who now gloriously gazes on the countenance of Him, *qui est per omnia secula benedictus*, who is blessed for ever and ever. "Thus the love of Beatrice leads to the desire of knowledge, and knowledge in its turn leads to faith.

I must now conclude with a few words about the general aspects of Dante's teaching. Dante may be said to have concentrated in himself the spirit of the middle ages. Whatever there was of piety, of philosophy, of poetry, of love, of nature, of art, and of knowledge, in those times, is sublimated to a quintessence in his writings. His is the first great name in literature after the night of the dark ages. The Italian language, in all its purity and sweetness, in its aptitude for the tenderness of love, for the violence of passion, or for the clearness of philosophical argument, sprang fully grown and fully armed from his brain. The *Vita Nuova* is still the best introduction to the study of the Tuscan tongue. The astronomy and the science of the *Divina Commedia* are obscure when we translate them, but in their original diction are as clear as crystal. The reputation of Dante has passed through many vicissitudes. Read and commented upon in Italian universities, in the generation immediately succeeding his death, his name became obscured as the sun of the renaissance rose higher towards its meridian. In the seventeenth century he was less read than Petrarch, Tasso, or Ariosto; in the eighteenth century he was



almost universally neglected. Nothing is more strange than the indifference of Goethe for Dante, as shown in the writings and conversations of his later years. His fame is now fully vindicated. Translations and commentaries teem from the presses of Europe and America. Societies are formed to investigate the difficulties of his works. He occupies in the lecture-rooms of regenerated Italy a place by the side of those masters whose humble disciple he avowed himself to be.

The Divine Comedy is, indeed, as true an epic as the *Æneid*, and Dante is as real a classic as Vergil. His metre is as pliable and flexible to every mood of emotion, his distress is as plaintive and as sonorous. Like Vergil, he could immortalize by a single epithet or person a place or a phase of nature. Dante is indeed a better observer, and a more faithful describer, of nature than Vergil, whether he is painting the falling of snow in the high Alps, or the homeward flight of birds, or the swelling of an angry torrent. But under the gorgeous pageantry of poetic description there lies an unity of conception, a power of philosophic grasp, an earnestness of religion, which were entirely unknown to the Roman poet. Dante is too essentially a Christian to be fitly compared with a pagan poet.

More striking is the similarity between Dante and our own Milton. Yet it lies rather in the kindred nature of their subjects, and in the parallel development of their minds, than in any mere external resemblance. In both the man was greater than the poet, the soul of each was "like a star and dwelt apart." Both were academically trained in the deepest studies of their age. The labours which made Dante lean made Milton blind. The "Doricke sweetness" of the English poet is not absent from the tender pages of the *Vita Nuova*. Better, perhaps, it would have been for Milton if, like Dante, he had known in youth an absorbing passion. The middle life of each was spent in active controversy; each lent his services to the State; each felt the quarrels of his age to be "the business of posterity," and left his warnings to ring in the ears of a later time. The lives of both were failures. "On evil days though fallen, and evil tongues," they gathered the concentrated experiences of their lives into one immortal work—the quintessence of their hopes, their knowledge, and their sufferings.

But Dante is something more than this. Milton's voice has grown faint to us; we have passed into other modes of experience and of thought. If we had to select two names in literature of men who are still exercising their full influence on mankind, and whose teaching is thus developing new sides to coming generations, we should choose the names of Dante and Goethe. Goethe preached

a new gospel to the world, the pagan virtue of self-culture, a sympathy with every form of human feeling, which declines to judge and which often passes into indifference. There is no department of modern literature or thought which does not bear upon it the traces of the sage of Weimar. But if we rebel against this teaching and yearn once more for the ardour of belief, the fervour of self-sacrifice, the scorn of scorn and the hate of hate which is the meed of the coward and the traitor, where shall we find them but in the pages of the Florentine? The religion of the future, if it be founded on faith, will demand that faith be reconciled with all that the mind can apprehend of knowledge, or the heart experience of emotion. The saints of these days will be trained, not so much on the ascetic counsels of the *Imitation of Christ*, or on thoughts which, like those of Pascal, base man's greatness in the consciousness of his fall, as in the verse of the poet, theologian, and philosopher, who is placed by Raphael with equal right among the conclave of the doctors, and on the slope of Parnassus, in whom the ardour of study is one with the love of Beatrice—while both are made subservient to that burning zeal which lifts the soul from the abyss of Hell, up the terraces of Purgatory, to the spheres of Paradise, till it gazes on the ineffable revelation of the existence of God Himself, which can only be apprehended by the eye of faith.

## THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

*BY THE REV. CANON CURTIS.*

THE first question to be asked is this:—What is the position which the Church of England supposes herself to hold in this country?—or, in other words, What is her own idea about herself?

She believes herself to be part of that great brotherhood which was planted in this country twelve hundred years ago, and which has left no corner in the land unevangelized. No one has been able to show a break of continuity in the work of the Church of England. In this light must be interpreted every claim of the Church, if her action is to be understood and her system to be fairly treated. There is another leading principle of the Church that must not be left out of account; the great Master laid down the true relations of the Church to the State in the words, "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's," thus leaving it to us to find out their exact relationships. Accordingly the Church of England, has always recognized that human life has two sides, Secular and Sacred—though they are essentially and at bottom one—and has drawn some frontier line between them. Hence, on the one hand, she abhors Erastianism—the State "overriding" the Church; and, on the other, Romanism—the Church "swamping" the State.

## ESTABLISHING THE CHURCH.

But whenever any State is sufficiently of one mind about its religion to give it public recognition there is no harm, says the Church of England, in such recognition being granted. And if Christianity be thus established, as it was first by Constantine, the Church is willing to teach the people the best she knows, and even to send her bishops to serve in Parliament, so long as that duty is required of her. Nay, further, should the State lawyers feel so satisfied with her Prayer Book as to embody its teachings in Acts of Uniformity, who can demand that the Church should prevent

it? Hence the Church becomes established, not by individuals, but by the nation. The first State Church in these islands was established by Ethelbert King of Kent. Long afterwards Magna Charta acknowledged the Church of England as free; but such freedom did not then, and does not now, seem to her incompatible with connection with the State. The Church of England is, indeed, strong enough to take care of herself without the State connection; but a disunion between the two is deprecated by her, as a far greater calamity to the State than to herself. The connection involves no breach of charity, no lack of fairness to other religious bodies who are endeavouring to promote the knowledge of the same truth; and even if it be an error to maintain that there should be union between Church and State, it seems to her a very harmless and a very pardonable one.

#### HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH.

He would next refer to the historical facts by which the Church of England justifies her position.

In point of time, the leading date for the Church of England is A.D. 600. Just at that time two events happened concerning persons of first-rate importance. They were the death of St. Columba in the North of this country, and the arrival of St. Augustine in the South. Our heathen ancestors had just settled down in Britain, and found themselves placed between Christian Ireland on the one side, and Christian France on the other. Missionaries came both from North and South; and they Christianized and civilized us. Iona, lying off Scotland, and Thanet off Kent, were the two centres whence Christianity issued and converted our wild ancestors. Columba had settled in Iona; Augustine in Thanet. Ere long Theodore Archbishop of Canterbury merged all the dissociated congregations in the kingdom into unity. Thus one hundred and fifty-four years before any Kingdom of England was established, the Church of England was established. There were three great necessities which then were receiving attention: (1) that of civilizing and elevating the warlike tribes of the country; (2) of bringing the soil under cultivation, draining the marshes, etc.; (3) of obtaining security by consolidating the nation. Now all these inestimable benefits were conferred upon our people, in a great measure, by the Church. Her priests went up and down the country and were at that time in friendly connection with the Church of Rome, then a great benefactor to this land. Since that time there have been two great crises in the history of our Church. The first, in the days of William the Norman, was the Reformation of the Church on the Continental

model, by a separation of the lay from the clerical element. But this was a retrograde movement, for the Church became more than ever subjected to Rome with its now extravagant pretensions. A second Reformation in an opposite direction, therefore, was inevitable, and it came into view in the time of Wycliffe, when the old superstitions were being rapidly broken down. Then under Queen Elizabeth there was further change, bringing the Church into closer relationship with the State: and for three hundred years the Church has had to fight her old enemy the Pope, whose interference with the "things of Cæsar" she has always protested against. In 1532 Parliament agreed to sever connection with the Pope entirely, and then changes for the better went on apace, though not without many mistakes; but besides Rome the Church had to oppose Puritanism. It was a miserable pity this conflict was forced upon her; for the Church and Dissent agree in ninety-nine points out of a hundred. Indeed, the great majority of Churchmen heartily accept the modern situation in which they are placed with regard to Dissent by recent legislative enactments of the State.

#### THE TEACHING OF THE CHURCH.

And now what is this wonderful activity of the Church all about—what are her doctrines? First and above all she teaches that there is a vast and awful power pervading all nature which we call God. So the Church teaches men and women to look up from this sin-laden earth and to say "Our Father, which art in Heaven." Not that the Church pretends to understand God; it is Agnostic on that point. For, as Augustine says, it is impossible for the lower to understand the higher nature. Next, the Church asks us to accept the doctrine that man was meant to be a higher thing in nature than he actually is, and that Jesus of Nazareth comes nearest to the idea of what man was intended to be—self-denying for others' sake, even unto death. Nay, she carries up this thought so high, that she includes in her creed what is called the Divinity of Christ; endeavours, by every kind of direct and of symbolical teaching, to give forcible expression to the Christianity of her Master and Founder; and always strives to keep in touch with the chain of the past. In doing this there have been many faults, sins, and errors; and even a superstitious overprizing of the most precious things,—such as the Bible, the Ministry, and the Sacraments.

For, like the Quaker, the Church recognizes as the chief renovating power, the Spirit of God, which a man requires in addition to the Bible and other means of grace. There is room,

no doubt, in the world for a great variety of agencies—Heathen, Mohammedan, and Christian; but the latter is by far the best of all, the Church thinks. “Go into all the world, baptizing in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.” This name, slightly expanded into the Apostles’ Creed, is all that the Church of England demands of us to believe in. As to the Inspiration of the Scriptures, the Church has never formulated any doctrine whatever about it. As to Baptismal Regeneration, it merely means a second birth (as it were) into the family of Jesus Christ. The Real Presence means: “Cannot you see through a symbol to the *reality* behind it?” Nor are rites and ceremonies of much real importance. The late Mr. Mackonochie used to say that he was willing to officiate in his shirt-sleeves if the Church so bade him? What the Church did want was Faith, Hope, and Charity. Only have *faith*; do not think there is nothing beyond what you can understand. Never let go *hope* when cast down, even by having done wrong,—hope for redemption out of sin and out of death. And be assured that *charity* is everything—the spirit of sacrifice for others’ sake, the spirit of serene and generous love.

## THE UNITARIAN

BY HENRY W. CROSSKEY, LL.D., F.G.S.

*(Minister of the Church of the Messiah, Birmingham.)*

It is my privilege to speak to-day, on behalf of a body of men, upon whom it cannot be said that a very favourable judgment has been passed either by the Churches of Christendom or by the world at large.

By a large number of Christian Theologians, for many a long year, Unitarians have been condemned to "eternal perdition," i.e. (if the religious men who use such words realize their meaning) to share the very worst fate to which the most degraded of our race—scoundrels and liars, thieves and murderers—could by any possibility be doomed. When we have remonstrated, we have been met with a curt, sharp, decisive syllogism, derived from a verse in the Gospel of Mark: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned:" "You do not believe, therefore the conclusion is inevitable."

This we have been told, to our mingled amusement and amazement, is "*the word of God*;" and its acceptance cannot be regarded as any sign of want of charity in man!

The shadow of this stern condemnation falls darkly over us throughout the whole confines of what is called technically "the religious world"—the world of divided and battling sects;—a world which, in my judgment, often proves itself less generous-hearted than the world of poets and artists, men of science and novelists, philosophers and statesmen. In *this* "religious world" the Unitarians are very generally regarded with suspicion and distrust.

Among Christian Sects we are the dangerous people. Religious communion with us is interdicted. Through the length and breadth of England there is scarcely a church or chapel—save it belong to the small group known as "Free Christian" or "Unitarian"—in which an avowed Unitarian would be permitted to preach, although he himself would willingly exchange pulpits with the most orthodox of orthodox believers. Books, bearing on their title-page the name of the "Unitarian Association" are

practically placed on an *index expurgatorius*; and devices have to be employed to obtain a general circulation for them.

Men will sometimes come and listen to us in public halls, who will not enter our churches—fearfully imagining, I suppose, that the germs of our pestilential heresies fill the air they would breathe in them, and haunt the cushions on which they would sit, so that they might “catch” Unitarianism, like smallpox or scarlet fever.

The Education Act, which excludes from Board Schools the teaching of creeds and catechisms “distinctive of any particular denomination,” is so interpreted by the majority of the English School Boards as to mean that Unitarians are not a denomination entitled to any particular respect; and in schools supported by the rates, to which Unitarians as well as Trinitarians, Jews as well as Christians, may be compelled to send their children, the doctrines of Biblical Infallibility, the Fall of Man, the Atonement and the Trinity are very commonly taught; and scholars sing hymns of glory to the “Bleeding Lamb” and the “Crucified” God!

Even when men throw off the popular creeds, and announce opinions which are as much entitled to be called “Unitarian” as a rose is to be called a rose—they will repudiate that name with indignation—as though it were shameful; and denounce us as narrow bigots should we venture to apply it to them.

Outside the ranks of the professed adherents of distinctive Churches a curious aversion to the Unitarians may sometimes be noted. We have, e.g., fallen under the lash of that great prophet of the nineteenth century—Thomas Carlyle. He meets a Unitarian minister, and admires him—“One of the sturdiest little fellows I have come across for many a day. A face like a rock; a voice like a howitzer; only his honest, kind gray eyes re-assure you a little;” and after asking with amazement—in the spirit of the famous old question “Can any good come out of Nazareth?”—“That hardy little fellow, what has he to do with the *dusthole of extinct Socinianism*?” describes the Unitarians in no complimentary terms: “These people and their affairs—” he writes—“seem all melting rapidly enough, into thaw slush, or one knows not what. Considerable madness is visible in them. ‘*Stare super antiquas vias!*’ No, they say we cannot stand or walk or do any good whatever there; by God’s blessing we will fly—will not you?—here goes!’ And their FLIGHT!—it is as the flight of the *unwinged*; of oxen endeavouring to fly with the wings of an ox.”

*Why do I speak of these things?* As an appeal *ad misericordiam*? God forbid that I should speak of my RELIGION with bated breath and whispered humbleness!

A man has no firm faith in his religion—no solemn confidence



that its Temple is upbuilt upon the Rock of Ages—when he can *apologize* for it.

I have noted the adverse judgments passed upon the faith I hold, because I believe that the unpopularity of a cause is a divine challenge for its careful study. The stone "rejected by the builders" is the very stone to be considerably and conscientiously examined, to see if it may not be fitted "to become the head of the corner." Discarded principles of thought and conduct make majestic demands of their own upon the hearts and souls of men—in the great might of the excessive wrong that may perchance have been done unto them. Not once or twice only, to find the world's heroes its prisons have had to be searched; not once or twice only has truth been found in those intellectual dungeons, heavily barred with iron prejudices into which scorned heresies have been pitilessly thrust.

In this world's history, its "foolish things" have so often been chosen to "confound the wise;" and its "base things" and "things which are despised, to bring to nought things that are," that the condemnation of any principle by the numerical majority of any generation, is like the sound of silver trumpets heralding the presence of a Power, on behalf of which it may fairly be pleaded that there is at least sufficient chance of its possessing truthful authority to justify the lover of righteousness in entering upon a calm and thorough study of its claims.

In this spirit, although condemned as a heretic by every one of the great Churches, whose thoughtful and devout representatives have stood before you, I ask your kindly and generous consideration for the religion commonly known in this country as the religion of the Unitarians.

One further word I am bound to say by way of prelude. Every Unitarian speaks for himself and for himself alone. I am the mouthpiece of no organization; I cannot be "brought to book" by any authority on earth for any word I utter, however wild and foolish it may be. I am no more amenable to a "Unitarian Association" than I am to a presbytery or a general assembly, a lord bishop or a court of arches, a general council of Christendom or a pope.

Although born and bred, trained and educated, among Unitarians, and a minister in the churches they frequent during my whole period of active life, I have never signed with my hand, or professed with my lips, a dogmatic "Unitarian Creed." The principles of my Unitarianism forbid me—for reasons which will presently appear—to sign a "Unitarian Creed" as peremptorily as they would forbid me to subscribe to the "Westminster Confession of Faith" or the "Thirty-nine Articles," even should I personally

believe every doctrine those documents enunciate. In this I do not stand by myself; *no* Unitarian can speak authoritatively for any other Unitarian. The Unitarians are not like an organized regiment of soldiers, keeping step with each other in the ranks, and promptly obedient to their commanding officers; they are simply and solely a band of independent men, who are bound together, as friends are linked to friends, by certain broad and deep, although unwritten and unenforced, sympathies, ends, and aims,

All, therefore, I can do is to present statements for which I alone am responsible. Since, however, I have held from childhood to manhood continuous and intimate religious fellowship with those who are commonly called "Unitarians," *this much* may be fairly concluded—viz. that a man holding such convictions as are mine has his place openly acknowledged among them, and may find a spiritual home within the churches in which they worship.

*To this extent—but simply and solely to this extent*—without any egotistical assumption, I may claim to be their representative. Should any Unitarian question what I say and declare that my thoughts are not his thoughts, I reply, "I worship where you worship, and no man has forbidden or can forbid me."

At the outset, there is one striking characteristic of the Unitarians that must be made especially clear and firmly emphasized, or our whole position will be misunderstood.

The body of men called "Unitarians" hold that no series of dogmatic articles of faith, no "creed," ought to be imposed upon the ministers or members of a "church" as a condition of religious fellowship; in other words, that a church ought to be kept as freely open for the pursuit of religious truth as a college is for the advancement of learning.

The name "Unitarian" is applied to men who hold, *as individuals*, certain opinions; but it does not adequately describe the constitution of the *churches* in which they worship. Our churches, with very few exceptions, *have free and open trusts*; they are dedicated, i.e., to religious purposes, but no special form of theological opinion is made legally binding upon their ministers or members.

Personally, I happen to be a Unitarian; but I am the minister of a "church" in which no subscription to any specific articles of theological belief is either required from the congregation or involved in my own position. The ministers who preceded me held many opinions which are not mine; they frankly and freely taught them. The ministers who will follow me will, without doubt, not teach altogether as I teach; and no legal restrictions will close their lips. The living men and women of each day and

generation are at absolute liberty to worship God according to their consciences, without being compelled by any Trust Deed to forsake the churches their fathers built.

The term "Unitarian Church" somewhat hides from the light of day this great fact. In the irony of fate, a body of men who place less stress upon dogma than any other body of men in the world, have yet been christened with a dogmatic name. Strictly speaking, what is popularly known as a "Unitarian Church" is a church in which "Unitarians" can and do meet for worship, but in which no legal obligations exist to check or forbid the free pursuit of truth. Our history illustrates our principle.

The Act of Uniformity (1662) rendered it imperative upon every clergyman to declare his unfeigned assent and consent to all and everything contained and prescribed in and by the Book of Common Prayer; incapacitated every person from holding a benefice or administering the Lord's Supper who had not previously received episcopal ordination; and prohibited anyone from preaching or conducting public worship unless he did it according to the rites of the Church of England. Two thousand ministers flung up their benefices and went out into the wilderness of poverty, and endured patiently public scorn, rather than live in ease as slaves. Commanded not to preach—they preached. Churches were built for them by their immediate followers, and the law was most justly, most nobly, and most gloriously defied; not without pains and penalties, imprisonment and bonds.

The life of those churches these brave men refused to shackle with the chains of any creed. Sufferers for conscience' sake, they resolved that their children and their children's children should be free. Devoutly orthodox in creed themselves, they yet entrusted the charge of that they deemed the truth of God to the unfettered mind of man.

These men were our fathers; in the churches they and their friends and followers built, we worship. Gradually, generation by generation, the freedom they bequeathed was exercised; under its high warrant other opinions than theirs found a rightful home in their Houses of Prayer—Trinitarianism passed into Arianism, and Arianism into Unitarianism. Discussion undoubtedly attended these changes of thought; but on the whole they were effected with wonderful forbearance and kindness, and when it appeared that it was possible to raise actions in the law courts for the purpose of depriving those holding Unitarian opinions of the property inherited from their fathers, an Act of Parliament was promptly passed to prevent what it was acknowledged by statesmen of all parties—by Sir R. Peel and by Lord Macaulay—would be a grave injustice.

It is not for us—the living men of to-day—to say to the great tidal waves of human thought, “Thus far shall ye come and no farther.” If *our* children can find a better religion, the temples in which their fathers worship to-day shall still be theirs.

As our Trust Deeds are free, so is membership of our churches. If any living soul find in our services aught to strengthen him against temptation—to uplift his aspirations—to fill him with noble ardour to serve his fellow men—he is welcome. He is put through no theological examination either of a heretical or orthodox type; be he saint or sinner, we dare not shut in his face the doors of the temple of our God! I am not unfrequently asked how we manage to prevent those with whom we may have no sympathy from coming and taking possession of our churches. Simply—by not attempting to “manage” the matter at all; by excluding no one we fling ourselves upon the hearts and consciences of men—in confidence that the more thoroughly human hearts and consciences are trusted, the more completely will trust be justified.

As with our Trust Deeds and our church membership, so is it with our ministry. The college in which a large proportion of our students are educated has for its motto these words: “The College adheres to its original principle of freely imparting Theological knowledge, without insisting on the adoption of particular Theological doctrines.”

As for our ministers, lengthened experience gives me some slight right to speak. Thank God, this hand has never been compelled to sign itself a “slave!” From the first day on which I entered a pulpit until now I have remained as personally unpledged in teaching religion, as any professor in a college chair of Art, Literature, or Science. Thank God, I am minister of a church which declines to close its doors with the bolts and bars of the theological articles upon any child of God who chooses to come and worship therein! Neither have we established a central organization with authority to interfere with the independent action of any church. The “British and Foreign Unitarian Association” is simply an association of individuals interested in its purposes; and it has neither power, nor do its managers show any inclination, to control the affairs of our congregations.

The spiritual freedom of every assembly of men, gathered for the worship of Almighty God—this is our first principle. The grounds upon which this principle is defended are not far to seek. We cannot presume to think that we possess the whole truth and nothing but the truth; and dare not, therefore, dictate a creed either to our comrades in the pilgrimage of life, or to our posterity. Were we to draw up for an astronomer XXXIX. or

CCCXXXIX. Articles of Astronomical Faith; and ask him to sign them; and to promise to teach those articles only; and to admit to his class only those students who would accept them—would not his reply be an indignant refusal? Would he not exclaim, “Who am I that I should declare no wonderful discovery can be made? What is man that he can dream that he has probed the infinite depths of the awful Heaven clad with the loveliness of a thousand stars?” Would not a teacher of Chemistry—of Physics—or of Philosophy—give the same refusal to any kindred demand? Yet it would, I submit, be far more rational to say we know everything that *can* be known, or at least all that it is necessary to know regarding Astronomy, Chemistry, Physics, or Philosophy—to frame a settled and changeless creed upon these subjects; and to insist that there shall be no professor and no student at our colleges who will not sign it, than it is to say, “We have drawn up articles of faith about Christ and the Eternal God—and none shall be our ministers—and none shall have fellowship with us, as members of our churches, who will not subscribe to them?”

No creed within the scope of the wit of man to devise can permanently secure uniformity of belief. Human words are susceptible of a hundred meanings—even when employed by severest lawyers in Acts of Parliament—still more completely do they fail to convey one distinct thought, and one distinct thought only, when used for the purpose of defining the infinite truth of God. A coach-and-four may be driven through an Act of Parliament—but a little child can ask a question which will bring to confusion the meaning of the strictest creed.

We trust the truth of God—surely whatsoever be His truth, He will protect. Were we to build a glass roof over an oak tree, and carefully guard it from the weather; and fearful lest it should fall, prop it up with stone buttresses—we should kill it for our pains. Exposure to the air and the storm strengthens it—its leaves are greener as they drink in freely the breath of heaven; its mighty trunk stands more firmly when kind nature is relied upon for its sustenance and support. “Whatsoever is of the truth” needs likewise no artificial protection—its roots strike deep down into the heart of man, and all the powers of heaven and earth are pledged to its protection. The union established by natural sympathies is, we believe, stronger, more enduring, and sweeter than that achieved by the enforcement of an agreement to one creed.

Worshipping together, certain convictions (of which I have immediately to speak) have grown up amongst us; but because we absolutely trust the truth, and are persuaded that “the Lord has more truth yet to break forth out of His Holy Word,” we

refuse to convert them into fetters by formulating them into creeds.

I do not for one moment venture to say that the Unitarians have always been faithful in their allegiance to the great principle I am stating and defending. This Finsbury Chapel is the last place in which I could venture to speak of the consistency of Unitarians. I frankly admit, and admit to its honour, that this is a chapel in which more than one man upon whom Unitarians generally have looked askance has found a hearing. I cannot forget that W. J. Fox once stood in this pulpit, and received scant justice at their hands. I confess with sorrow that, when W. J. Fox enforced with his marvellous eloquence those opinions touching Christ and Christianity then current among them, he was honoured; but when he declared that the Lord our God works by law and not by miracle, and that pure and undefiled religion does not rest upon the sole authority of a message brought by supernatural agencies from heaven to earth, he was to a large extent discarded. His opinions may have been mistaken or correct—that is not the question; the question is whether he had not a right as a Unitarian to hold them by virtue of the freedom of the churches in which Unitarians worship. Neither can I forget how that prophet of God, Theodore Parker, was covered with contumely because he preached *not* the Christ who is said to have cast out demons from the maniacs, walked upon the waves, and fed thousands with a few loaves and fishes; but the Christ who healed the broken-hearted, and welcomed home the prodigal, and pardoned the woman that was a sinner, and would fain have delivered the captives and set at liberty them that were bruised.

I cannot forget these things; but I yet maintain that these passing inconsistencies cannot shake the fact that the love of Religious Liberty underlies the whole history of the Unitarians, and that in this day and generation it is so intensely cherished that it would be as possible for the uplifted arm of man to turn back the sun in the sky, as for any section amongst them to secure the establishment of even the shadow of a dogmatic creed for the churches in which they worship.

All Unitarians certainly regard the churches they frequent as places of worship. To do otherwise would be as great a perversion as to employ a Literary Society, or a Scientific College, for theological purposes. A church is a religious institution, and the freedom of a church is necessarily freedom within the limits of religious thought.

As the natural and inevitable result of their freedom, broad and striking differences of opinion exist among the Unitarians,

differences indeed which would scarcely be tolerated; or, if silently tolerated, would receive no public and avowed sanction, among any other body of men in this country united for religious purposes.

For example: Some Unitarians believe that Jesus Christ wrought miracles; others reject as legendary those parts of the Bible which record such "wonderful works," and yet claim to be "Christians;" some pray to their God "through Christ;" others humbly seek direct access to the spirit of their Holy Father, and in the most solemn moments of their lives would be "alone with the Alone;" some call themselves "Christian Theists," or simply "Theists;" others cherish a firm faith that a special and peculiar revelation of the will of God was made through an accredited and supernaturally endowed "Messiah."

But no ecclesiastical machinery exists among Unitarians, by means of which any man can be excluded from church membership because his intellectual convictions differ from those held by his fellow worshippers.

In spite, however, of widely prevailing divergences of thought, certain distinctive and fundamental religious principles have won acceptance, or, at least, have found a refuge and a home among the worshippers in the Free Churches of England, principles to which the name "Unitarian" is in common speech applied. What these are I will attempt briefly and clearly to describe; but it is necessary to premise that *the Unitarians are characterized by the method they employ to gain religious truth more emphatically than by any system of doctrines whatever*. To discover religious truth they turn to Science and Humanity.

In the fixed and determined laws in changeless action among sun, moon, and stars; within our own minds and hearts and consciences, and in the conditions imposed upon their growth; in the course of history, in which events are overruled for the accomplishment of purposes unintended and unimagined by the actors in its dramas, we meet the will which is not *our* will, the authority which is not *our* authority, and have revealed to us what is the pleasure and the determination, and to that extent what is the character of the Supreme Power of powers. Man's decrees have not determined the methods by which this earth, the worlds around, and his own race have come into existence, or established the laws in accordance with which they are actually governed. Every scientific fact must therefore be accepted implicitly as a Divine truth, and conversely any "creed" concerning God which contradicts a single scientific fact must necessarily be untrue.

The unfailing constancy of natural laws, with the resulting

harmony of the worlds, is more wonderful than the most wonderful of miracles ever recorded. It is more than amazing to note that an established law never fails. North and south and east and west; at the bottom of the ocean; in the depths of the sky; in the unfrequented desert; in the recesses of pathless woods; among weeds and flowers; in the pool of water which is as a universe to myriads of unseen creatures—no spot can be found in which the laws of nature, which are to us the laws of God, lose their hold or fail in their persistency. More wondrous still is the law of duty to which a good man subjects all appetites, desires, tempers, and inclinations.

When in the character of a man conscience and affection are at one, the warm heart yielding its love to no object the conscience does not approve; when personal purity is united to mercifulness, sin being hated while all the influences of bad education, sordid surroundings, inherited tendencies have due allowance in passing judgment upon the sinner; when enthusiasm, bright, hopeful, keen and eager, is wedded to farseeing and calculating wisdom; when unyielding courage, the courage of the man who can sail on any sea and land on any shore, fearless of any known or unknown foe, is tempered by the gentleness far readier to suffer than inflict pain; when resolute and determined endeavour to win from *this* earth and this life, their choicest gifts, is blended with enduring patience; when the love of God and the love of man are as one emotion, inextricably intertwined, so that no service is offered to the Lord in heaven, which is not also a service to man on earth—there is a harmony of character sublimer far than the ordered harmony of this outward universe—the music of the spheres. The awful Power of powers, men reverently name God—cannot—it is our conviction—be *less* worthy than the noblest man. As Thomas Carlyle writes: “All that is good, generous, wise, right, whatever I deliberately and for ever love in others and myself, who or what could by any possibility have given it to me, but *one* who first *had* it to give. This is not logic, it is axiom. Logic to and fro beats against this, like an idle wind on an adamant rock.”

We worship the God of *Life*—not an almighty theologian, chiefly interested in “Articles of Faith” and calling men to heaven or dooming them to hell, according to the correctness or incorrectness of their opinions touching His Infinite Being. The Lord God Almighty is the Creator of the Man of Science, the Philosopher, the Historian, the Wit and Humourist, the Novelist, the Dramatist, the Poet, and the Artist. The God and Father of Abraham, Isaac, and Joseph, is also the God and Father of Shakespeare and Galileo, Milton and Wordsworth,



Michael Angelo and Beethoven. In a great library we stand in a temple of God, sublimer than is the temple of which the earth is the pavement, and the star-clad sky the over-arching roof.

To gain religious truth from nature and humanity the Unitarians maintain that man must use and trust the natural faculties he possesses. They assert the right of the human intellect to reject what is unreasonable; the right of the human heart to reject what is unlovable; the right of the human conscience to reject what it condemns as evil, in any and every "creed" presented for their acceptance. A man who cultivates his rational powers and uses them faithfully—although he may form mistaken conclusions, does all that his Maker can expect from him with respect to his creed, inasmuch as he does his best with the faculties bestowed upon him. It would be utterly unjust in a Supreme God, to enable us to think—and then *because we think* to condemn us. We have affections which bind us together by the sweetest and tenderest ties and render us capable of sacrificing all earthly treasures for love's dear sake—when any creed, therefore, attributes cruelty to the Creator of the heart of man, we cannot receive it. "Or what man is there of you—" asks Jesus Christ—"whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?" This principle makes short work of many a fierce dogma. Would a father torment a child for ever? Impossible, must be the reply. Then we conclude at once that the doctrine of Eternal Punishment must be false. By our consciences we mark the distinction between good and evil. It is true that what one man esteems good another may pronounce evil, just as what is a rational conclusion to one man may be a perverse superstition to another. What we believe everyone is bound to do is—to obey his own conscience, and not to attribute to his God any actions which he would condemn as wicked among men.

I read in the First Book of Samuel the "Lord of Hosts" spake through his mouth these words to Saul: "I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass"—and was angry because this terrific commandment was not executed to the last drop of blood. I do *not* believe that such a command was ever issued by the Lord of Hosts. Why? Because my conscience declares that promiscuous slaughter in war is a great wickedness. Suppose General Moltke, when he led the German army through

France, had ruthlessly put to death man, woman, and child, together with all cattle of the field—the world would have stood aghast with horror. I dare not ascribe to the God of humanity a deed my conscience starts from with horror, as infamous among men.

The Unitarians at the present day, with possibly a few individual exceptions only, apply these tests to all the books of the Bible; and ask: Are their teachings reasonable? are they humane? do they accord with the dictates of conscience?

Science, with no uncertain voice, declares that the world was not made in six days; that the serpent went upon the ground long before man's appearance; that death came into the world before a sin was committed; that weeds are no sign of a ruined soil; that a flood of waters never covered all the earth at one time; that madness is not caused by the entry of "devils" into the soul. Such statements as these, therefore, are not believed, although they are written in the pages of the Bible. Using our ordinary sense of the distinction between right and wrong, we find in the Bible more than one code of morality. In its earlier books polygamy and revenge are sanctioned; while "witchcraft" and the doing of work on the Sabbath, are pronounced to be crimes worthy of death. The "Sermon on the Mount" sets aside what "was said by them of old time"—with no uncertain emphasis. The rough and barbarous warrior's code of duty which guided Joshua in his relentless wars does not correspond with the teachings of the great Master of Nazareth, the spirit of whose religion finds voice in the angel-song which is said to have rung through the sky at His birth—"On earth peace, good will among men."

The desponding scepticism of the Book of Ecclesiastes—perhaps the most thoroughly sceptical book ever written—does not harmonize in the practical duties it inculcates either with the majestic prophecy of Isaiah: "As the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations;" or with the wondrous injunction to toil divinely conveyed in the words "As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand."

We feel bound therefore to use our best judgments in order that we may discriminate between the antagonistic views of life and calls of duty contained in the Bible itself.

I can hardly express the fulness of my thankfulness that my religion justifies this application of rational methods to the study of the Bible. The Book of Genesis touches me infinitely more deeply with its childlike faith—its pastoral beauty—its patri-

archal simplicity—because I do not attempt to make Moses speak the language of Lyell and Darwin; and do not judge Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob by the standard of modern civilization.

The Psalms have infinitely greater power to make me lie down in green pastures and to lead me beside the still waters, than they could have did I feel bound to regard the wild curses uttered by David against his enemies as the very “word of God” Himself.

The Prophets become mightier guides when I study them as men of Israel and Judah striving to direct the politics of their day by the eternal laws of righteousness, than they could possibly be to me were I to regard them as mere predictors of the fate of a few cities and the results of a few wars.

The Gospels and Epistles are the richer in spiritual influence over my soul because I believe that it is more certain that the “blessed” among men are the merciful, the peacemakers, and the pure in heart, than it is that Christ turned water into wine; and that the metaphysics of Paul do not stand so far above criticism as those sublime words, “Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.” In ceasing to be regarded as infallible, the Bible has become to me far more truly a Book of Life.

Exercising their spiritual freedom, and seeking truth by the method now indicated, those called Unitarians have (as I have previously stated) arrived at a general agreement respecting a few great religious principles although so far from employing them as theological tests for church membership, they have never even reduced them into any fixed and final shape as *doctrinal formulæ*.

*The Unitarians are Believers in one God.* They are not so presumptuous as to imagine that they can define the Infinite; but facts, which come fairly within the scope of human knowledge appear to them to establish the existence of One Spirit, One Power, One Life, pervading, sustaining, guiding all that is.

Every form of energy can be converted into some other form of energy. Stars are linked to stars, and systems of worlds to systems of worlds; while the elements of which a myriad orbs are fashioned are the same as those to be found in the earth on which we dwell. Moving bodies on earth are directed by the same forces as the planets in their courses. The physical history of our globe cannot be studied apart from problems that involve the history of every star in the sky. As completely as the body is one, although it has many members, so is the universe one although it contains millions of worlds. Organism is connected with organism, and the first creature crawling on the shore of the

first sea is related by secret life-ties to the insect floating in this morning's sunbeam.

"Nature," writes Humbolt, "considered rationally—that is to say, submitted to the process of thought—is a unity in diversity of phenomena; a harmony, blending together all created things, however dissimilar in form and attributes; one great whole animated by the breath of life. The most important result of a rational inquiry into nature is, therefore, to establish the unity and harmony of this stupendous mass of force and matter, to determine with impartial justice what is due to the discoveries of the past and to those of the present, and to analyze the individual parts of natural phenomena, without succumbing beneath the weight of the whole. Thus and thus alone is it permitted to man, while mindful of the high destiny of his race, to comprehend nature, to lift the veil that shrouds her phenomena, and, as it were, submit the results of observation to the test of reason and intellect."

Throughout the ages one moral law has persistently been applied to the feelings, thoughts, and purposes of every individual man, as to communities and nations. Purity and lust, selfishness and self-sacrifice, cowardice and heroism, justice and injustice; have brought forth the same fruit, each after its kind, from the beginning of time until now—in Ancient Babylon and Egypt, as in Modern England."

All the men and women existing upon earth, belong to one family; share, that is, a common humanity. This phrase, "a common humanity" is neither vague, rhetorical, nor sentimental; it expresses a sublime fact. A man as a man, the wide world through, has distinguishing endowments. He can master circumstances as no other creature can. He can think, love, do his duty, sacrifice for others even to the death. The "civilized" gentleman of the drawing-room—has passions which unite him to the barbarian; the barbarians we may despise have some of the feelings of gentlemen. The saint is linked (as only the saint himself knows) to the sinner;—and the sinner has powers hidden within him, which may uplift him to the communion of the saints.

The world in which man lives is intimately related to the constitution of his being—

"My voice proclaims  
How exquisitely the individual mind  
(And the progressive powers perhaps no less  
Of the whole species) to the external world  
Is fitted; and how exquisitely too  
The external world is fitted to the mind,  
And the creation (by no lower name  
Can it be called) which they with blended might  
Accomplish."

Faith in One God is the recognition and expression of this blending together—this dependence upon each other of all atoms and all worlds—in the physical universe; this union of man with man in a “common humanity;” and this intimate connection of man with nature.

*The Unitarians believe that a noble life is the one supreme requirement of the God they worship.*

What is a noble life? Not simply a life adorned by gracious culture; not simply a life rich in the sweet joys of refined tastes and personal affections; but a life spent in the unselfish service of man. The noblest man is the humblest servant of his fellow-creatures. He is as “a nerve o’er which do creep the else unfelt oppressions of this earth;” he is the unlooser of heavy burdens; he is the leader of forlorn hopes for truth and freedom and righteousness’ sake; he is the friend of publicans and sinners; he is the bringer of glad tidings to those in the bonds of their lower passions; he is the teacher of the ignorant, the uplifter of the fallen, and the champion of those who have no helper. The world’s iniquities and the world’s miseries are heavy burdens on his soul; and he cannot endure to dwell in peace and ease and comfort, while *they* remain unredeemed and unrelieved. Christianity to the majority of Unitarians is *not* an abstract system of doctrines about the essential nature of the Infinite God and the rightful place of a “Messiah” in the hierarchy of created beings; but the religion that demands that they should put away all evil from their doings, and press forward to the highest nobleness which can be attained by man. Many of them freely criticize the letter of the records of the life of Christ, and in no way consider themselves bound to accept every text as an oracle from heaven; but they turn to the Cross as the sign and symbol of the religion of the divine life, rendered perfect by the sacrifice of self in the loving service of man. To the Unitarian nobleness of character outweighs in worth all other considerations whatever. A man may be a heathen, or a Jew, or Christian; a Confucian, a Buddhist, a Mahometan or what not; he may be a Catholic or a Protestant of any sect; he may be a sceptic and a doubter;—nay, he may more than question, he may declare that he sees no reason for believing, in any religion at all,—and yet, if he be an honest man and strive to do his duty towards his fellow-creatures, he is, in the faith I cherish within my heart of hearts, an accepted saint of God. I no more believe that a just God will punish an honest man for an erroneous faith, or for the lack of any faith at all, than I believe that He will condemn me to perdition because in my unconscious ignorance when a flower is presented to me, I assign it to a wrong species; or when I have to examine a rock, I place it in a forma-

tion to which it does not belong. Wrong opinions, conscientiously formed, are not crimes.

I shall be asked how Unitarians propose to deal with men who are *not* noble; how they meet the awful problem of human guilt. I have but one answer to make; and that the very simplest and plainest of all possible answers. I can see no way to "save sinners," except by persuading them to go and sin no more. Save by obedience to the eternal laws of righteousness I know not how the human heart *can* be purified from its stains. A sick man can only hope for recovery, as he observes the conditions of healthfulness; so is it with the sick soul. Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap; and until he sows wheat, he cannot garner wheat in his barns. As we believe "in fire that it will burn," in gravitation and electricity, in the flowing of the tides through the influence of sun and moon, in the warmth of the sun and the fragrance of flowers, so we believe in the ceaseless and unswerving activity of moral laws. No theological contrivance will avail if we scatter chaff over a garden to make it blossom with flowers; if we scamp our work and put in bad material, to render it strong and enduring; if we take poison, to protect us from death; neither will any theological contrivance avail to convert a sinner into a saint, unless he resolve to walk in the path of righteousness. We have no doctrine of "Atonement," therefore, to offer to the world in any shape or form save one—the Atonement for wrong-doing that can be made by nobler living. When Zaccheus the publican joyfully received Jesus Christ in his house, in order to relieve himself of the burden of guilt for any grinding down of the poor of which he might have been guilty, he cried: "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if *I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore to him fourfold.*" What was the reply of Christ? "And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation" (yes! mark, "*salvation*") "come to this house." *This* is the kind of atonement we plead with men to make for their sins; the salvation our religion offers them is the salvation of an ennobled life.

*In the religion of the Unitarians this World is regarded as a possible Kingdom of Heaven.*

This Earth as it is, how much fairer is it than we have had eyes to see! How much richer is it in blessings than we have had grace to understand!

By some forms of religion itself, have men's eyes been blinded to the glorious loveliness spread around them; and their hearts hardened so that they have not felt the full, rich, sweetness of innocent human joys.

An old monkish legend runs to the following effect: In May,

1443, a company of priests at the time of the Council went to walk in a wood near Basle. There were prelates and doctors and monks of all colours, and they discussed theological subtleties; but suddenly, in the midst of their dogmatic arguments, they stopped short, and remained rooted to the earth, before a linden tree whereon a nightingale sat and exulted and sighed in the softest, tenderest melodies. "Come away!" cried a shocked monk, "it is a temptation of the devil." A temptation of the devil—to be charmed from theological subtleties by a nightingale's song! In the religion I humbly cherish the nightingale's song tells me more of my Maker than do the subtleties of theologians.

I am taught by my religion that it is graceless ingratitude to neglect the beauties and glories of earth; and that we shall best prepare ourselves to receive any blessings that may be yet to come in the world unseen by heartily enjoying the world that is now seen.

In what is known as a "religious newspaper" I read the other day a report of a sermon by a popular and devout preacher in which the following tale was told: At a Gospel meeting a lady was in deep concern about her soul; and when pressed to believe "God's word about Christ" (as the preacher called it) replied, "I know that God won't save me to-day." The minister asked, "Why not? God's word says that whosoever believeth shall be saved, and now is the day of salvation." The lady replied, "Ah! but I know God won't save me to-day, because I have made up my mind to go to Mrs. ——'s ball on Tuesday evening, and He won't save me, you know, unless I am willing to give up the ball." The minister urged that God wished her then and there to believe that "through Christ He could and would save her soul from hell." The lady replied, "What about the ball?" The minister said, "Come to Jesus just as you are, with the resolve to go to the ball; and leave that resolve to Him. God commands you just as you are, and where you are, to believe that out of love to you His only Son died on the Cross for your sins to save you from hell." The lady burst into tears and cried, "I believe." The minister said, "What about the ball?" She joyfully exclaimed through her tears, "Ah! I don't want to go to the ball now; I have obtained something better—henceforth I shall live to return the love of Him who laid down His life for me."

In one of the charming letters of the keenest satirist of modern days, letters which show that the tenderness of Thackeray's heart excelled even the quickness of his insight into human follies, Thackeray writes: "I don't know about the unseen world, the use of the seen world is the right thing, I'm sure. It is just as much God's world and creation as the Kingdom of Heaven with all its

angels. How will you make yourself most happy in it? how at least secure the greatest amount of happiness compatible with your condition? By despairing to-day and looking up cloudward? *Pish* Let us turn God's to-day to its best use as well as any other part of the time He gives us . . . The bounties of our Father I believe to be countless and inexhaustible for most of us here in life; Love the greatest, Art (which is an exquisite, admiring sense of nature) the next. By Jove! I will admire, if I can, the wing of a cock-sparrow as much as the pinion of an archangel, and adore God the Father of the Earth, first; waiting for the completion of my senses and the fulfilment of His intention towards me afterwards, when this scene closes o'er us."

I cannot perhaps describe more clearly the spirit of the religion I hold than by saying that it bids me cry "Amen" to the words of the great humourist, rather than to the injunctions of the preacher to "believe" a faith which will compel me to regard the going to a ball as a desertion of Christ.

The Unitarians accept with all their hearts and souls the sublime fact that the history of man is the history of a progressive being. The legend of "the Fall" has a strange and touching beauty of its own. It is like the sigh of an outworn and weary man for the days of his childhood, when he knew no sin and had received no wounds in the fierce battle of life. But we dismiss it from our religion. "We believe in the rise and not the fall of man. We believe ourselves members of a race which has ever been pressing onwards, unfolding fresh powers, discovering new truths, recognizing higher and more comprehensive duties, escaping from barbaric instincts and surroundings, and establishing from age to age, in some portion of the world or other, a more wisely ordered and happier civilization.

The commonest school-books teach how our rude forefathers passed in their knowledge of the world's resources from the "age of stone," through the "age of bronze," to the "age of iron." When we study the history of nations we find that each empire did some service in the world, and only fell when that service was fully rendered and it encumbered the ground. The history of religion tells the same glorious tale: every religion has been in its day a step in advance. Practices and doctrines superstitious to us at our time, helped, as we acknowledge with gratitude, to uplift the souls of men. Every Christian Church, every form of faith, now to be found in the world is, we believe, suited to the wants of some human hearts, strengthens them to endure and toil and hope as they pass through this strange pilgrimage, and thus prepares in the desert a highway for our God.

Alas! we are none of us true to our religion. *So far as the*



*Unitarians are true to their faith* they stand in the ranks of the enthusiasts of humanity. THIS is their rightful place by virtue of their principles and their history, however poor and weak may be their organizations, however inconsistent may be their conduct, however timidly they may shrink from the logical consequences of their own convictions, however feebly they may discharge their duties. At least I may claim without boastfulness that they have to some real extent proved themselves among the enthusiasts of humanity by making their spiritual centres centres of beneficent activities. They taught reading, writing, and arithmetic in their *Sunday Schools*, when a knowledge of those simple arts was denied to the masses of our people. They conduct missions in which the wants of the suffering are heeded apart from any distinction of sect and party. They strive to unite themselves in the discharge of public duties with all men who are sufficiently liberal in spirit not to exclude heretics desirous of being useful in God's world from their company. And who is the enthusiast of humanity? such an enthusiast as I am moved by all the power and authority of my religion, first and foremost of all things, to pray that I may become? The enthusiast of humanity especially rejoices in all the bravest, most loving, self-sacrificing deeds recorded in the history of man; although performed by few they mark for him sublime possibilities for all the children of God, and are majestic prophecies of the world that is yet to be. His heart beats as he hears of the captain standing by the sinking ship until all are saved; the soldier carrying a wounded comrade from the battlefield amid a storm of bullets; the miner penetrating dark and dangerous shafts in which the air is charged with poison and flames to rescue his comrade; the surgeon tending the sick in the haunts of pestilence.

He reverences with a boundless reverence those who have had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings; yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment; who have been stoned, sawn asunder, tempted, slain with the sword, for righteousness' sake.

He enthrones as his masters, lords, and kings, those who have been the world's outcasts, because the world's redeemers; who have opened the prison-house for the oppressed, and made the blind see and the deaf hear.

He watches and aids to his utmost power the work of those who would bring home the prodigal; drag the stained woman from haunts of debauchery; bring young children from the gutter to the school; and replace by angel presences of pure and holy feelings the demons of coarse passion which have entered into human souls.

The enthusiast of humanity learns from all that has been done

by man never to despair, and his confident hope, justified by the lives of those who have strived, toiled, and died for the ungodly, for the miserable, and for the wronged, is that

"A brighter morn awaits the human day  
 When every transfer of earth's natural gifts  
 Shall be a commerce of good words and works ;  
 When \* \* \*  
 The fear of infamy, disease, and woe ;  
 War with its million horrors and fierce hell,—  
 Shall live but in the memory of time,  
 Who like a penitent libertine shall start,  
 Look back, and shudder at his younger years."

Whatsoever of this enthusiasm of humanity dwells within my heart I owe to the religion I have so imperfectly described to-day. I owe to my religion also the crowning hope that the awful and majestic Power of powers, who has called into being as His children those who can so majestically, although through such dire and terrible struggles, pass from glory to glory, will not cast away as worthless any individual soul belonging to the race, He has so richly endowed with a capacity for endless growth, but has prepared a heaven "of many mansions" where all tears shall be wiped away from their eyes, and there shall be no more death ; neither sorrow nor crying ; neither shall there be any more pain ; for the former things shall have passed away.

## NONCONFORMITY.

BY J ALLANSON PICTON, M.A., M.P.

THE title of this paper was not of my choosing, and when I came to think of it, it appeared to me to present some preliminary difficulties to which perhaps I had better allude. Nonconformity, properly so called, exists only on a very narrow portion of the earth's surface. It is confined almost entirely to England and Wales. To a certain extent it may be said to exist in Scotland, but on Scottish Nonconformity I shall have another word to say presently. It is entirely unknown in Ireland, it is also unknown in the United States of America, and likewise in the British Colonies. It is unknown in Ireland, in the United States, and in the Colonies, for the simple reason that there exists in those happy lands no established and authoritative Church, from which it is a crime, or at least a social misdemeanour, to dissent. Where there is no legal standard of Conformity, obviously there can be no such thing as Nonconformity; and I could not but admire the sound common-sense of Lord Salisbury a few months ago, who, when he was presented with an address from certain alleged Irish Nonconformists immediately remarked that no such people could possibly exist in Ireland, since the Church was disestablished.

Not only is it the case that Nonconformity, properly so called, exists over a very limited extent of the earth's surface, but the word has an entirely different meaning on opposite sides of the Scottish Border. I heard an amusing illustration of this one day when I was standing upon the Calton Hill in Edinburgh, and surveying the noble prospect afforded there of the Modern Athens. I was told that a good Presbyterian citizen had recently been showing the lions of his native city to an Anglican clergyman on a visit there. They ascended the Calton Hill together, and the Presbyterian citizen pointed out with pride the large number of ecclesiastical buildings to be seen. Said the Anglican clergyman, "Certainly it is a glorious sight." "Well, yes," replied the Presbyterian citizen, "but it is a little marred by the steeples of those interloping Nonconformists." "What!" asked the

clergyman in surprise; "Surely there are very few Methodists or Independents in this country." "Oh, no," said the Presbyterian citizen, "it is the Episcopalian Dissenting Churches that I allude to." The good Anglican clergyman had not thought at all of the fact that what was Nonconformity in England was Conformity in Scotland, and what was Established in England would be Dissent in Scotland. The word has, as I have said, entirely different meanings on opposite sides of the Border. This is obviously a difficulty in the way of any comprehensive treatment of the subject of Nonconformity. For all the forms of Christianity are Nonconformist somewhere or other, and it can scarcely have been the wish of the committee who manage this series of lectures that I should attempt to deal with the opposition between all historical Church establishments on the one hand, and all Dissenting sects in every part of the world on the other. Nevertheless this idea of opposition gives the key, in my view, to the meaning of the managers of these lectures, in asking me to undertake the subject of Nonconformity. They wish me, I presume, to deal with those English forms of Christianity the evolution of which has been marked by the clash of conflict against the traditional Catholic hierarchy, and, consequentially, against the secular despotisms that have raged in this country in times gone by.

Now, the various denominations whose history has this mark of conflict in common present endless varieties of belief and of ecclesiastical organization; but all these varieties sprang originally from one central conviction, on which I desire to dwell. That central conviction was this, that a living inspiration is always to be preferred to a dead tradition. Observe I use the word inspiration in no magic or miraculous sense. As nearly as I can put it into the form of a definition, what I mean thereby is an impulse that comes to emotional souls from a glimpse through the veil of illusion into the deeper realities behind it. And such glimpses into the deeper realities of life, when they are experienced, seem like—and I verily believe are—the inflow of a universal life upon the sensitive heart. From Isaiah to Shakespeare and onwards to Burns or Browning, where, apart from the poetic beauty of expression in their utterances, you are moved to deep and noble emotions it is only by words that take you behind the veil of conventional ideas, and surround you with the verities of moral truth.

I don't know that ever a landscape looks more charming than when it is suddenly revealed to you through a rent in a cloud. I remember in the often misty, but always grand and beautiful, land of Norway, I was wandering once down a mountain-side

towards the seaward end of a valley, and I found myself entirely encompassed by an impenetrable mist. But after some few minutes of patience, suddenly a rift was cleared, and down below I saw the solid luminous rocky feet of the adjoining mountains, and amidst them an exquisite little village, with deep red roofs relieved against a background of verdant meadow. Never did the solid luminous earth appear so real or so beautiful to me, as by contrast with the bewildering, uncertain mist in which I had been lost. So it is with the soul that gets a glimpse of solid, luminous reality through the uncertain mists of conventionalism and dead tradition.

Those who have been sometimes wearied out with the dull monotony of many Nonconformist services, or perhaps disgusted with the mercenary vulgarity of others, may wonder that I should attribute to Nonconformity any share of such inspiration as I have spoken of. How can there be in Nonconformity, as we know it in most conventicles at the present day, any impulse coming to emotional souls from a glimpse through the veil of illusion into the deeper realities behind? But remember, I said just now that all varieties of belief and organization, embraced within this wide word Nonconformity, sprang *originally* from such inspiration; I did not say they always represent such inspiration now. They sprang originally from such inspiration, and were for the most part glorious in the beginning. The stream that stagnates as dead ditchwater, in the spreading mouth at the outlet of a tidal river, may have leapt into the light as liquid crystal, where the mountain-top meets the heavens; and so it may happen, and very often does happen, that organizations which appear now as very dull and prosaic sects had most noble origins. It would, however, be invidious to particularize by way of illustration, and therefore I leave you to apply the remark for yourselves.

Now, it is in its origin that Nonconformity is most instructive to us. In its after-progress I am fain to confess that it has often been far more useful for purposes of warning, except in some respects which I shall advert to presently. The conflict between Nonconformity and the established hierarchy is only a modern form of the perennial opposition between priestcraft on the one hand, and prophetism on the other. The priest, from the very beginning of religious organization, and even perhaps in prehistoric times, represented customs that had become sacred from their inveteracy. He represented traditional mysteries which necessarily clothed these in ritual. He represented spiritual authority that arrayed itself in pomp and glory. The prophet on the other hand, represented inspiration in the sense that

I have given to the word. He represented the emergence of truth out of mystery; the substitution of life for ritual, and of moral force for the mechanical weight of authority. You may find this contrast vividly portrayed in the Old Testament. A quaint and striking instance occurs to my mind in the Book of Amos the prophet. There we read that Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, the most sacred place at that time in the northern kingdom of Israel, was seriously scandalized by the plain, straightforward words of invective uttered by the mouth of Amos against the wickedness of the priesthood and the people of the court. Being unable to bear his words longer, and apparently somewhat afraid of him, Amaziah said: "O, thou seer, get thee into the land of Judah, and there eat bread and there prophesy: but prophesy not in Bethel; for it is the king's chapel, and it is the king's court." The reply of Amos was more forcible than courteous, and by no means so touching as the words uttered by a still greater prophet, Jeremiah, in somewhat similar circumstances. He resolved, owing to the strenuousness of the opposition against him, to speak no more in the name of the Lord; but, says he: "His word was then within me as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." In such illustrations as these you have, set forth with dramatic force, the contrast between the priestly order of things sustained by convention, custom, and passion; and on the other hand the vital inspiration of the prophet, who sees through the mists of error a new truth—or rather, an eternal truth freshly revealed—and must speak or die.

Christianity itself, was in its origin an extraordinary development of this opposition between prophetism and priestcraft. You know it is said of Jesus that when he addressed the multitudes "they were astonished at his doctrine, because he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." Now, foolish commentators have sometimes, though not in recent times, seen in these words an acknowledgment of some divine and supernatural claim on the part of Christ to instant obedience, not on account of the truth he spoke, but because of his personal prerogatives. Such, however, is as far as possible from being the meaning of the words. The contrast is drawn between his teaching and that of the scribes, who were the satellites of the priests. The scribes gave form and order to the traditions that had come down amongst the priests and their followers. The scribes put into ancient and dried formulas the old customs that had become sacred through inveteracy; and their only idea of proving any opinion was to count up the number of authorities by whom it had been held. But this new prophet, Jesus, appealed to no

external authority whatever. He spoke words that were luminous with the truth they bore to the soul within. As he told the people of meekness, of mercy, of forgiveness, of brotherhood, of simplicity, of humility, the words bore their own evidence with them to the conscience of the hearer, and needed no appeal to any other authority. This is the real force of the description of his preaching, as that of one who spoke as having authority and not as the scribes. His words came as a revelation bearing its own evidence with it.

And yet Christianity, be it observed, was not in its origin, a Nonconformist denomination; that is to say, it did not depart or separate itself from the established religion of the day. It kept the law of Moses; and the very first followers of Jesus, like himself, worshipped in the Temple and in the synagogues. It was St. Paul who first developed Christianity into an outwardly Nonconformist religion. It was St. Paul who first taught that the ritual and law of Moses was worthless, and had no power of salvation in it. It was St. Paul who first invited heathen of all classes and of all races to enter the Church without undergoing any superstitious rite, and without binding themselves to observe any ancient law whatever. What would Christianity have been had it lived up to St. Paul? St. Paul is sometimes honoured by exaggeration on the one hand, and not sufficiently honoured on the other for the real virtues he possessed. St. Paul was not the profound philosopher, not the man of gigantic intellect, that he is sometimes represented to be. But neither was he the Calvinistic theologian that he is sometimes described as being. St. Paul was certainly a prophet in the sense I have given to the word. The mist of Jewish convention and tradition disappeared from before his eyes, and he saw the solid luminous realities of moral truth and goodness that are in themselves eternal, and independent of any positive law whatever; and he taught those higher and broader truths of morality as sufficient in themselves for salvation. All that has been ascribed to him as Calvinistic theology is only so much illustration, so much rabbinical habit, which the man could not shake off, or to which he may have clung, either on his own account or on account of the interests of the people whom he addressed. He does indulge largely in rabbinical modes of argument, and in Jewish illustrations; but those who carefully read his writings will always see that there is an object beyond these illustrations, and that the ultimate end is always the establishment of a moral truth, independent of mere convention and tradition. It is too often forgotten that St. Paul never throughout his writings, so far as we possess them, ever suggested such a thing as excommunication for differences of religious

belief. He does occasionally tell his disciples to separate themselves from a brother who is walking in scandalous impurity; but those who read and remember will know that, in one of his epistles, he refers to brethren in the Corinthian Church, who actually said there was no resurrection. What does he do? He argues with them. He tells them of what he believes to have been his own experience; he charges them with inconsistency and with folly; but he gives no direction that they shall be excommunicated from the Church.

How very different was his practice from that which would be inevitable in any so-called Evangelical Church at the present day! Paul wished to establish a higher life amongst the people. For this purpose he separated himself from the old Jewish ecclesiastical organizations, and endeavoured to establish in the world a Christianity which should be entirely free from its traditions. But, unfortunately, no man in that age of the world could possibly accomplish such a superhuman task. Notwithstanding all St. Paul's teaching, the customs of Christianity ever tended to harden into ritual. Its traditional mysteries became associated, through its chief sacrament, with an irrational dogma. Its ritual demanded a priesthood. Its priesthood developed into a hierarchy; its hierarchy necessarily assumed the functions of a spiritual tyranny.

During all this process of degeneration, however, protests and reactions continually arose. For the life of any religion, like the life of an organism, is shown by its power of internal rearrangement and reconstruction to meet the necessities of changing circumstances. But the reaction most affecting the subject with which we are now dealing did not occur, so far as our information goes, until some six centuries had passed over the Church. In the fifty-fourth chapter of his immortal history, Gibbon gives us a most interesting account of the heresy called that of the Paulicians, a name undoubtedly taken from the Apostle Paul. According to Gibbon's account—and the best informed ecclesiastics allow that, whatever his beliefs may have been, his information is extremely accurate—a certain Syrian deacon in the course of his travels met with a Christian named Constantine, somewhere in the north of Syria, and in return for the hospitality he obtained in his house presented him with certain sacred documents, which turned out to consist of most of the canonical books of the New Testament. Constantine studied these with great eagerness, and was especially attracted, as anyone coming upon them for the first time would necessarily be, by the passion and vitality and energy of St. Paul's writings. Constantine felt as if a mist were opening, and through a rift he saw more luminous and solid truth behind.



Undoubtedly he and his followers soon fell into many fantasies and errors, but, at the same time, their views were characterized by very much vigour and simplicity. He shook off the yoke of priestly superstition. He denied the necessity of either bishops or elders to dispense the Word of God aright. He repudiated the absolute need even for the sacraments of the Church. He insisted upon a pure life, and simple attachment to the teachings of Jesus, as they had come down through St. Paul. He rejected the yoke of the Old Testament, and thought that the New Testament had in it quite sufficient for salvation.

His followers multiplied rapidly, and spread over a considerable part of Asia Minor. As was always the case, until very recent times, spiritual independence necessarily led not only to conflicts with ecclesiastical, but to resistance against the secular, powers. They made a violent fight for themselves, did these Paulicians; but in the course of a century they were suppressed, and removed entirely from their native soil, and transplanted to the land of Thrace. Here they came into contact with the Bulgarians, who had been newly established in the district, and created another sect of heretics which was viewed with the utmost abhorrence in the Middle Ages. Yet, though we must allow that probably they had a great many wild ideas mingled with their simple fervour, on the whole there seems to be good reason to believe that they retained, even in Bulgaria, very much of the simplicity and devotion that had characterized the earliest Paulicians.

From Bulgaria this so-called heresy spread in various lines, traced by Gibbon, to the west of Europe, and he believed, probably on fairly good grounds, that the teaching of the Vaudois and the Albigenses was to be traced, if we only had sufficient information on the subject, to the sporadic preaching of these Bulgarian heretics, who derived their spiritual origin from the Paulicians.

It is impossible to trace their influence directly on our own country. But there is very much similarity between the general spirit of Wycliffe and the Lollards on the one hand, and the religious ideas of the Paulicians on the other; and one can scarcely help suspecting that through some underground channels, the influence of the original sectaries had been brought to our own country. Be that as it may, the followers of Wycliffe—the Lollards as they were called—kept alive a similar spirit, a similar desire to return to apostolic authority, for many years before the Reformation dawned upon this country; and it is doubtless owing to their perseverance and bravery and patience, that

materials were preserved in this country on which a really spiritual and moral reform could work.

The Reformation that took a visible form in the sixteenth century in this country was something very different from that inculcated by Wycliffe and the Lollards. The royalties who wrought that Reformation were practically untouched by any religious revolt against superstition. Their objects were entirely political. It was inconvenient to them to depend for any purpose whatever upon the foreign authority of the Pope. All they wished was to shake his yoke from their necks, while they, at the same time, preserved the whole of the priestly discipline, which was so convenient in dealing with the people. The result was that there were two movements in this country, by no means vitally united, or even connected one with the other. There was the hierarchic movement, which was merely the assertion of episcopal independence of Rome, while the Catholic tradition was insisted on in its Anglican form; and on the other hand, there was the Wycliffite or Lollard or Nonconformist inspiration, which demanded a return to the teaching and spirit of St. Paul.

It is obvious that I cannot take you through the history of the conflicts arising from the double character of our Reformation. I need only remind you that the priestly, hierarchic Church of the Tudors and Stuarts entirely failed to satisfy the revived prophetic spirit of the more radical reformers. This dissatisfaction had much to do with preparing the way for the Great Rebellion, and, still more, it had to do with ensuring the triumph of that rebellion.

But, alas! few of the victors in the struggle understood what spirit they were of. Their notion was, that if they were perfectly and confidently sure of anything themselves, they must compel other people to be equally sure of it; and never were they satisfied unless they could succeed. Absolute freedom of belief, complete toleration for all forms of ecclesiastical organization, seems to us so much a matter of course, that we can scarcely conceive how two hundred and fifty years ago it was absolutely impossible. Even when the presbytery had overthrown the hierarchy, and wrung from a defeated king and aristocracy the freedom that had been so earnestly desired, Presbytery turned out to be, as John Milton humorously said, "old priest writ large;" and the intolerance of the presbytery was a thorn in the side of the very few earnest and thorough-going men who felt that there was no remedy for the contentions of the time, but complete and entire toleration of all differences of opinion. Even under the Commonwealth—although from some study on the subject I, in my

heart, believe that Oliver Cromwell was most anxious to forestall future times in establishing tolerance even for Roman Catholics—it was impossible to carry out this idea. Yet all new discoveries that are made in ancient documents, and all more minute study of the experience of individuals and local churches in those days, give us continually a higher idea of the comprehensive and tolerant spirit that in general actuated the greatest sovereignty that this country ever experienced.

The restoration of Charles II. was in many respects the most disastrous event, the direst curse, this country ever suffered. Yet the persecution it brought on Nonconformity was by no means an unmixed evil. That persecution forced Nonconformists back into their proper duty of prophetic protest. It made them heralds of a wider freedom than it ever entered into their heads to dream of. It was not their theory, it was not their aspiration, but the necessities of their position, that compelled the passage of the Toleration Act. William III. was a man quite shrewd enough to see that it was utterly impossible ever to stamp out religious differences in this country; and his Dutch experience made him comparatively regardless of hierarchical superstitions. He was, therefore, quite ready to make any reasonable compromise which would give peace in his time; and thus it came to pass that he obtained the throne on terms which ensured some limited measure—a very limited measure it afterwards turned out to be—of toleration to those who dissented from the Church as by law established.

Toleration necessarily led afterwards to attempts at comprehension. When attempts at comprehension failed, the supporters of authority were so disappointed and vexed that they recurred as far as they could to methods of persecution, and so for more than a hundred years Dissenters were held to be rightly disabled from taking any public office of any kind unless they would sin against their own consciences, by conforming to the outward rites and ceremonies of the Church. Not until the year 1828 were the Test and Corporation Acts repealed, and the right of all Nonconformists fully acknowledged to take public appointments, municipal positions, or offices under the Crown.

Catholic emancipation followed, as you know, about the same time. It was a long while before the universities were thrown open to Nonconformists, and they are scarcely thrown open yet as wide as they ought to be; and to this day we cry out, apparently in vain, for the full and unlimited proclamation of religious equality to all parties.

That, however, is assured to us. It is impossible for us to draw back in the march of progress upon which we have entered,

and if not in our day, at least in the days of our children; the last shreds of intolerance will be swept away from our constitution.

Better, however, than any attempt to tell over again the history of the struggles that have ensued from the persistency of Nonconformity, better is it to attempt some brief summary of what we owe to Nonconformity as a phase of religious development. Very different estimates must necessarily be formed as to the special religious value to be attached to Nonconformity. Indeed, its modes of belief, and its modes of religious action, and its forms of worship are so endlessly different, that no general judgment can possibly embrace them all. I am content to say that wherever Nonconformity has kept alive its preference for living inspiration over dead tradition there it remains a good thing; there it is still a glorious influence in our land. But wherever it has merely substituted sectarian prejudice for the traditions of a hierarchy, there it is necessarily evil. If I might give illustrations of Nonconformist bodies that have retained for a long time their preference for living inspiration over dead tradition, I could not but refer specially to the Society of Friends. There is no sect amongst the Nonconformists, which in its origin so entirely abandoned all submission to earthly authority in matters of religious opinion or religious worship. There is no religious body that has made greater sacrifices, there is absolutely none that has been so pure in its modes of action. For as you know, neither Presbyterians nor Independents, nor for the matter of that Baptists, scrupled to take the sword at times for the maintenance of their own views, or of the power of their own religion. But the followers of Fox have always confined themselves entirely to moral suasion or to passive resistance. And none have ever shown more martyr-like courage in bearing all the ills that a corrupt society could heap upon them rather than soil their consciences. And I cannot but think that the great statesman, whose voice is so recently silenced in the tomb, owed very much indeed of his signal moral influence over the senate and the people of this country to his Quaker training. John Bright had learned in the meeting-house that he attended in early life, near to which his remains now lie, in truly "consecrated" ground, to prefer moral truth to ecclesiastical forms, learned to prefer the direct utterances of an unsophisticated conscience to the quibblings and explanations of an effete theology. John Bright learned that the precious soul of religion is righteousness; and such convictions underlie all the pleadings of his eloquence throughout his long and illustrious career.

I might also, did time permit, allude to the power of inspiration

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for long possessed by the various Methodist connexions. Whether their inspiration survives as brightly to the present day or not, I will scarcely undertake to say. But there are sporadic movements of Nonconformity, such as those represented by churches scarcely connected with any sect whatever, in which able men—men of profound convictions and of patriotic vigour—I might say like the minister who used to preach in this building, the late Mr. W. J. Fox, have borne testimony to the superiority of present inspirations over effete traditions.

The inspiration does not die away. It may change from place to place; it may assume now one form and now another. It may be associated now with one, and again with another species of genius, but the inspiration is as immortal as humanity.

If I were to attempt to sum up the chief benefits that the country has derived from Nonconformity, I would say they are comprised mainly in the insistence on toleration, in the union of freedom of thought with reverence, and in the exercise of the arts of self-government.

Toleration, as I have already said, we do not owe directly to Nonconformists. It was not intended by the original Nonconformists themselves; but their persistence in maintaining their own position, and their impotence in attaining anything like supremacy, compelled them to become advocates of toleration, and therefore we do owe it indirectly to them. As to freedom of thought, very little credit can be given to those denominations who associate with the tenure of their most sacred edifices, a cut-and-dried but mouldering creed, believed probably by not one in a hundred of their congregation. They would chain men's thoughts if they could, but happily they have found it to be impossible. We do not owe freedom of thought, any more than toleration, directly to Nonconformity; but indirectly we may, because where a number of sects had been arguing and wrangling together, the conviction has gradually dawned upon a practical community that really it does not matter very much what people say about these things, so long as they act honestly and uprightly and purely. The conviction has gradually dawned upon the country that it is perfectly safe to allow thought to be free, so long as conduct is right; and in that sense we owe freedom of thought indirectly to Nonconformists.

But there is one characteristic of our English freethought which we owe even more directly to Nonconformity, and that is its alliance with a spirit of reverence. On the Continent you do not find this so often. There for the most part the power of establishments on the one hand, and the mocking scepticism that surrounds them on the other, suggest to us a weight of solemn humbug on

the one side, and heartless levity on the other. There is not sufficient appreciation in French or in most German scepticism of the enormous moral advantage that religious struggles have given to the world. But in this country of ours, the variety of forms prevailing amongst Nonconformists and the sacrifices that they have been ready to make for their religious convictions; the friction that has been created amongst these various opinions, and the charity that has gradually been forced upon the holders of these opinions, one towards the other; have all united to bring about finally, not only a law of toleration but a spirit of tolerance. And, moreover, all these influences have tended to bring about a conviction that all forms of religion have had some meaning, and all have been of some value to humanity. Accordingly in this country the progress of freethought is not destructive merely, it is constructive as well. We have learned to value the inspiration given in past times by religion of a theological order; and we are busily, and I hope not without fruit, asking now: How shall this inspiration be supplied from the eternal sources of truth ever open in the visible universe itself?

Finally, we Anglo-Saxons often make our boast that we are better capable of self-government than other races in the world. Not only here but in our colonies we exhibit both imperial and municipal institutions in which the rights of the individual are for the most part carefully observed while the needs of the community are insisted upon. Hardly, however, do we sufficiently remember one of the sources from which our capacity of self-government has sprung. The source I allude to is the exercise of self-government amongst Nonconformist churches. When first Dissenters from the Establishment met in holes and corners to carry on their own worship, or the various charitable undertakings which have always been connected with religion, they had no official authority to compel any one to keep order—they were necessarily dependent on each other. Each brother had as good a right to express his opinion as any other. They could only rule by the majority, and consequently they began to study the arts of self-government. They found it was necessary to make compromises one with the other; they found that they must exercise charity. They found that there was great need of patience. And those scorers who ridicule and laugh at the squabbles of deacons and ministers in Nonconformist bodies, and the fights between various sects and parties in "little Bethels," are blind indeed if they do not perceive that, precisely from such exercises in the art of self-control and self-government as were given in these apparently ignoble places, has gradually been developed to its highest possible extent the power of self-government possessed by the English people.

Remember, these little self-governing communities were scattered throughout the land for hundreds of years before we were a free people in the modern sense of the word; before the franchise was extended to every household. Undoubtedly the poor, who had little advantages of intellectual culture, owed very much to their membership of Methodist chapels, or of Independent meeting houses, or of Baptist churches, in various parts of the country, where they squabbled with each other until they learned to bear with one another in patience and charity.

On the whole then, I would say that the chief value that we should assign to Nonconformity in the history of this country is not on account of the theological opinions it has advocated, or the theoretical arguments whereby it has maintained them; but rather on account of its moral and political activity. And they who appraise this rightly will find in Nonconformity one of the most beneficent factors in the evolution of the British nation.

## METHODISM.

BY MRS. SHELDON AMOS.

WHEN I was invited to lecture here I had never delivered a lecture anywhere, and looking at the list of subjects undertaken by distinguished persons for this course, I was fainthearted, and though I did not like exactly to refuse a kind offer, I saw no excuse for speaking on any great World-Religion. Of ancient Egypt alone I knew enough to know that I knew very little. So I looked further, and seeing one lecture on "The Mass" I perceived that a portion of Christianity might be admissible, and then it was clear that I had hereditary right to speak on Methodism: for after the name of John Wesley himself there occurs no name of a Methodist organizer and, so to say, statesman so prominent as that of my grandfather, Dr. Bunting. And yet, though brought up in the innermost centre of English Methodism, it were with diffidence I should approach the effort to speak of the great American, Australian, and other branches of the Methodist Connexion, had I not, in the course of a life spent among singularly varied sets of human beings, found constantly a quite curious amount of ignorance about the meaning, history, condition, and aims of Methodism. If I can induce some of you to inform yourself about what I take to be at once the most conservative, the most radical, the most practical, and the most intensely spiritual of Churches, the one which has most frequently been rent by the fierce determination of the violent who take the Kingdom of Heaven by storm, to press on always to the next step in spiritualized and spiritualizing popular religion and Church government, I shall not regret having come to try to speak to you to-day.

I say that Methodism is conservative. John Wesley inherited both the Puritan and the Anglican traditions, and so the spirit of the Reformation, and you trace that back and back to the beginning through more and less obscure returnings to a primitive ideal. And John Wesley's four volumes of sermons and his notes on the New Testament are still the comprehensive, tolerant, broad, while minute and exact, body of theological teaching on which Methodist ministers are trained, and to which they declare their agreement



before they are ordained to the ministry. Such a mass of theological teaching cannot be rigid as a short creed. For while they exclude creeds wider and more elastic, there has been no proposal to dethrone them as Methodist standards. And in these are included sermons and notes which have caused High Churchmen and Low, Sacramentarians and Salvationists, alike to claim John Wesley as of their own particular way of thinking. I will not say that they are as wide as Christianity itself, but they are very inclusive and not rigid like creeds.

And Methodism is radical. No difficulty ever arose in Mr. Wesley's time nor since to prevent the most daintily trained clergyman, or son of a wealthy house, from finding himself either under the direction, or on equal brotherly terms, or in authority over, some earnest stonemason, or workhouse lad, or tailor, whom the grace of God had endowed with a spiritual force of delicacy that made them true brothers in work for their Master. And while the ministers set apart to give their whole lives to the preaching of the Gospel have their own place in the system of Methodism, there are several distinct facts which prevent the spirit of sacerdotalism from getting hold on Methodists. It is true that none but ordained ministers have ever administered the Sacraments, but that is held to be a mere matter of order and organization, not of heaven-given special capacity as transmitters of a grace not to be obtained save through them. It could not be otherwise, for, while Mr. Wesley himself and many of his first coadjutors were ordained clergymen of the Church of England, at the time when the persecuting clergy of the Church of England drove the Methodists from the Communion Table, and even refused their children baptism and their dead burial, many of the ministers who met in solemn conference, and after years of anxious consultation and of strong demand from the people, finally decided that it had become necessary for them to administer the Sacraments themselves to their people, had never been formally ordained by a bishop. Nothing would be more difficult than for a Methodist minister to trace any link to Apostolic Succession in the High Church materialistic sense. Nothing easier than for him to do so in the true spiritual sense of worship in the Gospel, though a solemn setting apart of men to the ministry, by ministers, had been the invariable rule since the first. Ordination by the laying on of hands did not become customary in Methodism till some forty years after that. So any theory of sacerdotalism would be a comedy in Methodism. Methodism holds that the special grace and wisdom needful for the due fulfilment of any calling in life, the ministry, banking, street sweeping, housewifery is to be looked for by all alike in answer to faithful prayer. B

Methodism is even more radical than this: from the beginning it has done what the most advanced political radicalism is only now with pains and difficulty advancing towards. And in Methodism the advanced political radicals often have their eyes closed on this one point, while the political and Methodist conservatives are more clear-sighted, because Mr. Wesley was himself more clear-sighted. He admitted women to almost an equality with men throughout his religious system. It is true that there were no ordained women to offer their help to him as some good clergy did, and it is true that he never ordained or sent women on "rounds,"—now called "circuits," and stiffly organized—as preachers in those rough times. But the son of Susannah Wesley, the mother of the Church, the woman who in those days of excessive wifely obedience had quietly taken in the villagers to her kitchen when her clergyman-husband was long absent from his charge, and in spite of his remonstrances prayed and sung and taught them as she was called of God to do; that woman's son, trained minutely by her in such methodical ways—of saving every moment of his days for orderly predetermined purposes—as earned for him, and for the great multitude whom no man has numbered, who throughout the world have now for one hundred and fifty years followed him more or less truly, the name of *Methodists*; that woman's son was not likely to err as to the spiritual capacity and function of women in the Christian Church. Like St. Paul, whose teaching as to the position of women has been so strangely reversed and perverted, recognized the duty of women extraordinarily called of God to preach, he advised and arranged that women's work should, so far as his organization was concerned, not force them into positions made too dangerous for them by the licentiousness and roughness of the days; but he, like St. Paul, was glad to learn from them, and was careful to explain that these were casual and temporary difficulties, and he gave to women as much place and authority in the Church as could then be. Women preached largely, and with great effect, in their own neighbourhoods and where they were invited to go. And it was not till the year 1801, when more timid, smaller-natured men were at the helm, that the Methodist Conference decided that the women should no longer have a place upon the lists of regularly appointed ministers in the Methodist chapels. One of the women thus rudely and foolishly excluded from Wesleyan Methodist pulpits was the original of Dinah Morris, the aunt of George Eliot, Mrs. Samuel Evans, to whom the news was conveyed with discomfort by my great-uncle, then the superintendent of the "circuit" in which she lived. He joined the Kilhamites, a number of people who had already left the Methodist Connexion in 1796, because they felt the growth

of that sacerdotal spirit which is always the haunting demon of the Christian minister going about seeking whom it may devour.

The date of this division, or first offshoot from Wesleyan Methodism, is, however, significant, as all the early dates of Methodism are. John Wesley had been born into an England brutalized by the deadened condition of the Church and the comparative decay of Nonconformity; and had throughout his laborious life been pouring on the people the spirit of brotherhood in the Gospel which availed to save England from the excesses, while it prepared it to derive immense blessing from the true underlying principles, of the French Revolution. And after his death, while the mourning and disorganized body of ordained and unordained "helpers" of Mr. Wesley (as the ministers were then called) were casting about for an organization that should keep themselves and the people together, it is not to be wondered that there were errors both revolutionary and anti-revolutionary, which time has quietly operated upon till the reunion is not far distant now of the central body of Wesleyan Methodists with the original Kilhamite secession, and others that have followed on more or less similar grounds. There are not many Methodists now living who would not say that each secession has taken from Methodism some of her saintliest and most intelligent children, and that Methodism has learned by each convulsion some lesson of democracy. In fact every point of Church organization which has been contended for by successive seceders, has now been carried in the body from which they seceded. And now at last Methodism seems to have learned its lesson. The authorities no longer hasten to drive beyond the borders energetic seething souls, anxious to keep the Church up to the point reached in popular government outside, and the young energetic men are content to submit to some delay, some tight holding of the reins, for the sake of those who do not yet, but soon will, think with them. The history of the last two years in Methodism has been a strange proof of this. A few men felt that the methods of service, of attack upon wickedness and carelessness around, were antiquated and less useful than they had been, and though their ideas were by many thought wild, conceited, dangerous, impracticable, the general sense of the Church was that room, time, money, and permission ought to be given for a fair trial. That the forward movement was right has been abundantly proved by success is known, I do not doubt, to some here. To how great an extent it has been successful it would need, in these days of quick and perfected communication, a world-wide knowledge to estimate. Meanwhile Methodists thank God and take courage, and turn with

a bolder face than ever to the surrounding masses of the people, rich and poor, Christian and non-Christian, and say : "Here is a form of Church organization which offers to you full use of every faculty you have, naturally or by acquirement, if only it is unreservedly devoted to the service of God and of His people the world over. That is the keystone of Methodism : personal consecration ; the consecration which is possibly only to the soul that is consciously forgiven and at one with God, at one in will and in deed, carrying His purposes, fulfilling His plans for the world day by day in every form of activity possible to humanity,—at one with God in Christ.

Methodism says that this union is necessarily a conscious one ; that with uncertainty as to the favour and love of God, as to the forgiveness of personal sin, there cannot co-exist the abounding joy, the impelling eagerness of love, which is the spring of practical Christianity, which is true socialism. Once it is realized that we are God's children and it becomes natural that, like Him, we should care for the poor and the unhappy ; that, like Him, we should take great part in the conduct of politics ; that, like Him, we should wage war against vice and cruelty ; like Him, love peace and pursue it ; like Him, of set purpose use our lives and our deaths for the good of others, seeking not our own.

But this is not a new doctrine introduced by Methodism, though it is the attracting\*force which has made Methodism—in spite of the hugeness of the numbers of people who call themselves Methodists all over the world, some millions—like a freemasonry. They may be Episcopalian in America, Calvinistic in Wales, Arminian in England and Australia and the South Sea Islands, and may vary in many small matters. In the great matter there is unity,—we know our sins forgiven, and we rejoice in the love of God. I do not mean that all who call themselves Methodists are faithful ; I do not mean that all born into Methodist houses live as the children of godly parents should do ; I do not mean that we are a mass of saints. No, indeed ; I mean that every loyal and true member of this great Church holds the doctrine that this peace and joy in believing is a privilege which only personal lack of faith or obedience to God's law can hold him from. That it is God's will that he should share His life and work. May God grant us all to see this truth ! It is a truth which has wrought the three great revolutions of the world in Christian times. St. Paul, earnest and energetic, distinguished for learning and zeal, conscientious, was but one man among many until one day he saw himself as he was in relation to Christ, and saw in the same critical hour what God in Christ was ready to be to him. He knew his sins forgiven : he knew that a new life had begun in

him. He was conscious that the Spirit of God dwelt in him witnessing to his spirit that he was the child of God, and leading, restraining, teaching him in all the ways in which till then he had relied on his own judgment. The opponents of Christianity, ignoring Christ's own promise, of such teaching by His Spirit, attribute the change of the then known world from Paganism of the most vicious type to Christianity to Paul, the man who had passed through this great crisis—this judgment of himself and of his relationship to God. But as the centuries passed on, and the Church had grown respectable and powerful, this necessity that each individual should in the same way see himself and herself in the light of heaven, and should receive the Spirit of God in order to live a true Christian life, receded into the background. Persecution over there was not the same obvious desperate necessity for each to be sure of a doctrine for which they might be called on to give up everything in the world. And the Christian Churches, while maturing in doctrine in some directions, grew rotten in doctrine in others, and the people called by that name ceased generally to understand that each one must live by conscious union with Christ as the only Saviour from sin and Teacher in the ways of life. The Church could speak with human voice; and ears were stopped, and did not listen for the inward voice of the Spirit. Then came Luther, and once more the Christian world rang with the teaching that this man had passed through a great crisis in life; had seen himself, as Paul had, in his true colours; had seen, as Paul had, the promised help of the indwelling Spirit; had received power once more to rouse the sleeping world, and proclaim to it the blessed fact that each one might know his sins forgiven, and learn by an ever-present Helper to live a life of purity and joyful brotherliness in the world, by word and deed—by political and religious activity to make it easier for those around him to live good lives, to return to God, to find the same help in life as himself. But, just as in St. Paul's time this new spirit in the people led to persecution by the authorities, who thought their power threatened by an appeal to the supreme authority, conscious in themselves that they did not subject their actions to the same law, so in Luther's time the new consciousness of right and justice caused wars to rage and a general seething unrest of the people of Europe, until the popular spirit was exhausted for a while, and lay down in deathlike sleep; and then the time of revolution followed on, in which Wesley, and the group of remarkable men and women who wrought with him, once more, in more hopeful surroundings, preached, and showed in their own lives, that Christianity is not an authoritative dogma to be taught and submitted to, but

a life of spiritual union with God in His Son Jesus Christ; that each one born into the world is born to see God as a Father who has in Christ shown Himself to be Love, and who dwells by His Spirit in the innermost secret place of life in everyone who receives Him, in such a manner that that person cannot but be conscious that sin is forgiven, that the law of God has become the expression of his own opinion and will, that he sees it in all ways to be good and to be desired. The Spirit of God witnesses with his spirit that he is the child of God. Thus, the essence of Methodism is simply that secret of Christianity which has again and again remoulded the face of society. At each fresh activity of this motor nervous system of the Christian body a great advance has been made. It is true that each time the period of activity has been followed by relapse, but it never had been as before, and each time the social system has been more fit to take a deeper and wider impression. And now, again, I believe that the same doctrine has begun to give a fresh impulse to a far wider world than ever. Salvationism—an offshoot of irrepressible vigour from a former offshoot that did not find room enough in the Wesleyan Methodism which was beginning to be respectable, and to frown on too much individuality in obedience to inward impulsions—Salvationism has touched the brutalized masses in our own country and elsewhere with a light and flame from heaven, and is sending such enthusiastic embassies to India as to convince the people there (as no previous missions have done) that there is power and truth in Christianity, since these preachers of it, like their Master, strip themselves of all their advantages and gladly lay down their life if only they may convince them that they have a Father in Heaven, a Saviour from sin, a Spirit of purity and wisdom, to lead them into all truth.

Salvationism is the offspring of Methodism, and is Methodism adapted to one section of society. But Methodism has its statelier moods, and its *bourgeois* developments. It has its "churches" with liturgy-organized services; it has its plain chapels with hearty comfortable congregational worship; and it has its lovefeasts and class-meetings. It is, in fact, less a material organization than a vital force. I believe that the next few years may see it doing once more what it did in Wesley's own day, pouring into churches here and abroad, new and old, and into a too respectable Nonconformity—for Nonconformity, by instilling good principles into the working classes, always tends to produce *nouveaux riches*, who are smug and too respectable for anything good—a vivacity, an audacity, of Christian vigour which must remould society again. It has been said lately by one of the privileged,

"We are all socialists," and it is to be hoped that at least the religious are going to prove themselves so.

In John Wesley's idea Methodism was not a Church. He permitted a Methodist service to be held in church hours, and even to the present day in quiet villages the same filial respect is shown to the National Church. The change came when the numbers of persons excluded from the Communion, and treated as pariahs by the clergy, grew so great that it was a practical inconvenience for them to be unable to use the best hours of the Sunday for the services to which they were attached. But the spirit of dissent which now exists in Methodism is an unnatural excrescence, and will die down again as soon as fresh life in the Church of England causes the hand of brotherly love to be stretched out. What I have said about the width of Methodist standards of doctrine suffices to indicate that the narrowness of dissent is non-Methodistic. It will always cherish the old name of "the Society called Methodists." And in this it has a great advantage. We are sometimes told that the Church of England is the historical Church, or the Church of Rome. But we say no—the historical Church is, of course, a body of people, called by any name or names, who freely seek for all good things in the past in various developments of Christianity, who exclude no help or beauty that can be proved to be helpful or beautiful now; that is ready to learn from comrades now living, or who have passed away to the Church above; that is, in fact, the heir of the saints of former days; is aiming at training saints now; and that is making Church history every day.

This Society has some ways of conducting its religious life that are subjects of curiosity and misunderstanding more than most religious organizations. Especially I mean class-meetings and lovefeasts, and of these I wish to speak. Lovefeasts are, at all events for the present, rather in abeyance, or take a different form. As I remember them, they were occasions on which pieces of currant-bread and water were passed from pew to pew in the chapel, and then, interspersed with singing and prayer, one short speech after another was made by whoever chose about the life of Christ in the heart. One would be full of joy and praise for help in trouble, or added and sharpened delight in happy circumstances. Another would tell of heavy-heartedness and clinging faith and hope in God. There was always a feeling of special approach to the presence of God, and I think these meetings were good. Of course they gave opening by their popularity to many strange speeches; and I must claim for Methodism a greater capacity for humour in religion than any other Church. We are not afraid of humour. It is a part of the human nature which our Master took

upon Himself; and when the human being is at one with Him, fun is part of the natural play of vitality. But it is kindly, decorous, and well kept in hand. Many and many a story of queer sayings in lovefeasts I could tell if this were the opportunity. They were domestic gatherings. Nowadays we meet differently, perhaps not so familiarly. Class-meetings, however, have not suffered much change. They were usually small gatherings of some dozen to twenty people for strictly devotional purposes, and for the purpose of giving and getting sympathy and mutual advice in leading a godly life. Very helpful, indeed, they are, and the tie that binds members of a class can become exceedingly valuable. They vary as infinitely as the characteristic of the leader or person who is accountable to Methodism for those put under his or her spiritual charge, as infinitely as the characteristics of the members. In some cases it is a stiffer, in some a more homely, meeting. But in every case the Word of God is accepted as the rule of life, and the little groups try to help each other to conform to it; and membership in one of these classes constitutes membership in the Methodist Society. We do not count our members by communicants or by attendance at our places of worship, so that when I quoted the numbers of Methodists all over the world as being five and a half millions, other Churches would, who count by church attendance, have multiplied that by at least four.

These domesticated groups are a great help to Methodist ministers in getting to know the needs of their people. For the minister is bound to visit all the classes once every quarter of a year, and so gets a quite rare opportunity of gauging the spiritual tone of his congregations. He learns where to look for the spiritually minded men and women who will be likely to be useful workers in the spiritual and temporal offices of the church; where the lads are growing who will make good ministers and should be encouraged, and where he can best get help for some doubtful or tender spirit whose troubles have been confided to him. And the people get to know him—a very important thing in Methodism. For Methodist ministers are not put in charge of a congregation for life, or till a better opening comes. They change from place to place every three years, alternating between country and town charges, learning life and people more thoroughly than any other body of men, and carrying with them from place to place a sense of brotherhood, and an actuality of friendship which welds Methodists of all classes and all places together. This healthy circulation was the invariable rule; indeed, the change used to be actually, and still theoretically may be, made every year. But for some purposes it is becoming



desirable to give longer tether to some few ministers, and the ecclesiastical system I have attempted to indicate is easily elastic enough for that. But there is another peculiar institution in Methodism, which greatly modifies the relation of the ministers and the people, and which enables me to say that with the exception of the administration of the Sacraments there is no function of the Christian ministry which Methodist ministers do not share with the laity. The pastoral office is shared with the men and women leaders of classes, the ecclesiastical rule of the Church is shared with laymen (and in the lower branches theoretically with women), and even the office of preaching is shared very largely with lay preachers who live by their own labour and give their Sundays to preaching in their own neighbourhoods, and sometimes in distant parts of the country. The office of a local preacher is one that has always been held by men of the most various attainments and positions in the world, and much of the vigorous life of the Methodist Society is owing to the fact that the ministry is thus felt to be not a far-off office, but one of the functions of the Christian life exercisable by anyone whose capacity for teaching is recognized by a number of his fellows. Many a useful local preacher has wished to be a minister set apart and ordained, but his suitability for Orders has not been clear to the authorities. It is evident that "priests and people," as they are commonly classed elsewhere, are more intimately and socially close together in Methodism than elsewhere. Yet there is no lack of reverence or esteem for those who deem themselves called, and whose call is recognized by the Church, to give themselves entirely to the work of the ministry. There is no superstition about Orders, but the ministry is considered the highest vocation in life, and worthy so to be held in reverence.

I do not pretend to do justice to my subject. I can do nothing more than hint at a few of the salient features of Methodism. But I can end my lecture to-day as some others could not do. You were not, I suppose, invited to become disciples of Confucianism or Shintôism, nor, I hope, of that oddity now called Buddhism which is not Buddhism; but I have the happiness to be able to say that I have no desire to take leave of any of you. I rather say, speaking in the name of Methodists in general, to all and everybody the round world over: "Come with us, and we will try to do you good."

## INDEPENDENCY, OR LOCAL CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

BY THE REV. EDWARD WHITE.

(*Ex-Chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales.*)

NEARLY forty years ago I spent ten years of my life in the little western city of Hereford, on the Wye, where, among our ten thousand people, we had religious folk of almost every species known in England: Anglicans of every type—High Church, Broad Church, Low Church; Roman Catholics; Methodists of each section—Wesleyan, Primitive, New Connexion; Quakers; Baptists; Plymouth Brethren, of two or three shades, hived in separate “rooms,” who loved God so much that they would scarcely speak to one another in the streets; Congregationalists; Unitarians; and professors of every type of Modern Agnosticism and Nothingarianism, together with a few active Infidels and Atheists. It was a strange experience. It was also an interesting opportunity. I was intimate with specimens of almost each variety of thought and character, from Deans and Canons, and Roman Catholic Priests, down to hyper-Calvinists, and God-denying materialists who had revolted altogether against modern Christianity. It was a position almost resembling that of Noah in the ark, where one could study close at hand every species, sometimes well-nigh watching their evolution of varieties and transformations. I was almost the only person in the city who seemed to wish to know all sects and parties; and, though not popular with any of them, they taught me many things which subsequent experience in this vast sea of souls in London has only confirmed during the subsequent forty years.

One of the chief of these lessons in the natural history of religion was the perception of the fact that all really good and God-fearing men are very much alike *inside*. If you could, as Plato somewhere imagines, cleave them down the centre, and lay open a section of their inmost characters, you would find them all, including many of the doubters, earnest for truth-seeking, provided you did not expect them to seek truth outside their own little sheep-pen; for then the passion for truth-seeking begins to die.

intensity; men are so much more under the influence of their friends and acquaintances than of abstract conscientious considerations. And yet, within these limits how much one could learn to love and admire round the whole circle! All the good men—I do not say all the professedly *religious* men, or all the pretenders—seemed to desire the right, and tried to enjoy the lower pleasures of life with due regard to the higher delights and duties possible to mankind. All the good men were diligent, generous, temperate, hospitable, and truth-speaking; clean-handed, reverent, and compassionate. And one had the feeling that, if their souls could have been taken out of their bodies, and especially out of the religious or non-religious bodies to which they belonged, they would together have composed a Catholic and Apostolic Church, which would have proved a mighty force against the powers of darkness in that Cathedral City, which indeed were considerable both in the lay and clerical departments.

We see modern Christianity under many disadvantages. The full breadth and depth of abstract Christianity is now found only, I think, in its own original documents, which are strikingly different from the more developed creeds and churches of later Christendom. If the Apostles had gone forth to attack Judaism, or the Heathenism of the Greeks and Romans and Asiatics, with the *Athanasian Creed*, or the *Assembly's Catechism*, or the *Declaration of Faith* of the Methodist or Presbyterian or Congregational bodies in one hand, and the Cross in the other, I suppose no one thinks they would have had much success in the overthrow of ancient paganism. The stupidity and ignorance of multitudes of both saints and sinners, believers and unbelievers, is an enormously powerful factor in the history of the world; though it is undoubtedly far better to have one eye than to have none, or even to have a cast in your one eye than to be stone blind.

I fear we must admit that the impartial and passionate search for truth is not so common an attribute of humanity as some imagine it to be. Thinking generally leads to the dissatisfaction of the set in which you are born, and that prospect, with the practical consequences following, seems to make a man think twice, before he thinks with the desperate resolution of perfect honesty in any direction.

Nevertheless, religious men are more closely related together within than often appears on the surface; just as one might think the whale a fish because he flounders and dives in the deep sea; whereas he is not a fish, but a hot-blooded mammal, and first of all to the amphibious mammals both in skeleton and physiological structure, and is a fish only in his environments; just as those who are Congregationalists feel, thank God, much more

closely related to the excellent Canon who lectured to you last Sunday afternoon than we do to some outward and congenital types of Nonconformity.

Your wish to hear some account of different "Centres of Spiritual Activity" has interested me much, although I cannot pretend to offer Independency to you as a short and easy road to the land of Beulah. I was born on this roadside, and one of the best things I have to say of it is, that the Independents persecute you and punish you less than any other set of religious people known to me for your individual beliefs on serious questions. As much as most men living I have gone against some of the theological principles which they hold in common with other religious bodies, and against some others special to themselves and their traditions; and yet they made me their Chairman by a pretty unanimous vote two years ago. And I felt much more confident of having been chosen to that post as a sign of catholic brotherhood, than as a sign of advancing sympathy with my particular opinions. The original Independents of the Tudor and Stuart reigns were, I suspect, what we should now think a rather narrow and obstinate set of men, full of conscience, and very godly, but rather fierce and bitter in their goodness, and ready to behave to Queen Elizabeth in such a manner as to make us wonder less at her desire to hang them; and under the Stuarts ready to become fighting Cromwellian Ironsides, if you did not at once fall in with their decisions in theology and ecclesiastical affairs. But the modern Independents have laid aside the sword for the pen, and, I think, have learned the noble lesson of tempering their love of freedom and of local church government by the ruling influence of the Divine Spirit, and by a readiness to submit to that influence in religion, however made known, by learning, judgment, and criticism.

Without pretending to set them up as exceptionally wise men, I venture to think that their history has taught them some lessons of exceeding value in assisting the development of minds moving in the midst of our modern chaos of conflicting beliefs and no beliefs. My duty, however, is not so much to praise or defend the Independents as to describe them, and classify them amidst other varieties of militant Christians. I believe most of their leading men would agree with me in saying that their attachment to Independency is built rather on its being less of an ecclesiastical system than any other known in England, except that of the Open Communion Baptists, who are Independents with one ritualistic difference. The main attraction is a readiness for local union with all sincere and obedient Christians as soon as ever the said local Christians of different colours are wishful to unite

with them on a broad basis in worship, in work, and in public usefulness. The very wideness of their aspirations works, however, in some degree against their success. A good party-cry has always more attractive power over the vulgar crowd than a great truth, and a well upholstered ritual has a better chance of popularity than either. Music, and dress, and office, are lawful accompaniments of every combination; but we hold that they ought to take a secondary place in a religion which deals chiefly with the unseen and eternal in both God and Man. It is to the *credit* of the Christian Scriptures that they are too full of thought and aspiration to be the textbook of ecclesiastical milliners and mantua makers; or of people who go almost mad with rage if you even offer to argue with them on any one of their so-called "Articles of Faith." You cannot even imagine St. Paul's letters being addressed to the parishioners of a great London parish. The ratepayers of St. Pancras or St. Marylebone, I am sure, would consider the Epistle to the Romans utterly unintelligible if addressed to them. And yet it originally was addressed to a recently converted company of Jews and Greeks and Romans. Early Christianity was a far more *intellectual* movement than it sometimes gets credit for, to say nothing of its moral qualifications. Each Church was an intellectual and moral *Ecclesia*, or selection of the fittest.

Now the attractions of this system to the Independents lie in these directions:—

It is an *attempt* to fall back on Original Christianity as set forth in the Apostolic documents. This type we find far more credible than the form which traditional Christianity has assumed in later ages. Take, as one example, the doctrine of the *nature of God*. The *Creed of St. Athanasius*—(falsely so-called, for he lived in the earlier part of the fourth century; but this "Creed" is not found in Greek at all, and not even in Latin, as Canon Swainson has proved, till the eighth century)—this Creed insists on the use of phrases concerning the Divine Nature such as *Trinity* and *Three Persons in One God*, which are found nowhere in the New Testament. It speaks of the Son and Spirit as "equal to the Father." The New Testament speaks of the Father as specially God: "One God the Father," and "one Lord Jesus Christ." And we prefer the New Testament language, and no one is rebuked for adhering to it. For myself, having been a preacher for forty-seven years, I have never once used the phrases, *Trinity*, or *Three Persons in One God*, in my public addresses and prayers, simply because they are not Apostolic; and no one has ever reprimanded me for the omission.

There is no doubt that the seven or eight thousand Independent and Baptist Churches, and the far larger number in America, firmly

maintain that the language of Christ and His Inspired Apostles signifies that in His Person there was some awful and sublime mystery of Incarnation, as it is termed, some unique union of a Divine Nature with the Human, which constituted Christ's personality as an unexampled combination of the *finite* with the *Infinite*: and they hold that it was this union which lifts Him up into the dignity of Son of God, makes Him the object of faith and worship, and gives Him power to bestow eternal life on His followers. We firmly believe that Jesus was the Christ or Messiah, or King, promised to the Jewish people, and to mankind. from early times, and that He is the "Saviour of the world," through whom the Infinite and Eternal Love deals in gentleness and mercy with sinful men, pardons us, and opens to us the prospect of admission into that great and everlasting union of worlds, which Astronomy now dimly unveils to our apprehensions; so that Christianity is closely connected with all the greatest thoughts and aspirations possible to Humanity.

I give this only as an example. We hold the general principle that Christians ought to strive by study and honest criticism to get back to *Original Christianity* in thought and spirit—and, even when we make mistakes, we sympathize with each other in this endeavour; for our onesided mistakes are often "right creeds in the making."

I might mention another example in relation to the question of the FUTURE LIFE. We agree that the ultimate truth concerning man's future can be learned only from our Maker; and if God has spoken to us in the Christian religion it is there we must hear His words. The old mediæval faith of all Christian sects was that man has been born immortal in sin, and inherits by descent the curse of immortality in sin and sorrow. From this men were to be saved by the Son of God, through renewal by the Spirit of God. It was held by the Calvinists that the finally saved were chosen to glory from all eternity. The *unsaved* were either "passed over," and left to their doom, or were even directly predestined to suffer in immortal misery.

There has been a deep and general revolt among us against this frightful result of false metaphysics and false criticism; and now, at least the majority of the Independents would agree that the true doctrine on destiny cannot be one which shocks all our primary notions on Divine Justice, to say nothing of Mercy. The beginning of human life in every case being in feeblest infancy, it cannot possibly be true that a dear little child exists now in a state of reprobation; or, if it depart, will go even into the "mildest hell" that St. Augustine could imagine. No, there is a great change here. The belief in just and awful retribution for

the wilful wasters of life, for wilful depravity of soul, for foul crimes against our fellow-creatures, for open defiance of God and of right—this belief in just retribution for distinct wickedness in thought, in government, in administration, in a punishment for wicked war-makers, oppressors of the poor, or robbers of the rich: this faith is stronger than ever, because the faith in Divine justice and *mercy* is stronger still.

Thus we value Independency, because it distinctly discourages dependence on the authority of priests and churches—on human standards of faith—in order that the mind may be free to order its belief and practice by the standards of Original Christianity.

Then, again, we value Independency from its habit of drawing a sharp line between the function of the State with its *law*, and of the Church with its *Gospel*; and for the steady war it maintains against the union of the two.

The State is the organization of Justice; the Church is the organization of Grace. Any attempt to unite the two must work confusion in proportion to the completeness of the union, by adulterating the spirit and defeating the purposes of both. The State is a beneficent institution for the assertion and protection by law of all rights—of life, family, property, and reputation—and these rights are defended by force, and vindicated by penalties on offenders. Thus the magistrate is to be a "terror to evil-doers," as the Christian Apostle himself boldly says. "If the magistrate, under the guidance of a spurious humanitarianism, or a perverted Christianity, fails in his duty to the evil-doer, he himself deserves the punishment a thousand times over which he failed to inflict. The Church is founded on the idea of pardon, forgiveness, forbearance; and is a special society of believers, who thereby become brothers, who voluntarily bind themselves to forgive and overcome evil with good. They are organized for good works of mercy, for truth-spreading, for saving evil doers, for teaching the young, for helping the poor, for practising Christian morality; finally, for maintaining these ends by a "discipline" which excludes obstinately hostile elements.

It is impossible to conceive of two societies more profoundly differing in their principles, ambitions, methods, and aims, when each is confined to its proper function, than the State and the Church. If you strive to unite them, what you call to establish the Church, you frustrate the ends of both. You soften the action of the State till it ceases to fight as it ought to do against injustice and violent wrong-doing, by both rich and poor; and you harden and secularize the Church, and convert it into a pale shadow of the State, pious in aspect, but worldly and too often uninspired within.

The Independents have always upheld this distinction, and their ideas have made way. Disestablishment is a long process; it has passed through several stages already, the last is approaching; and when the Church of England is disestablished, we hope that instead of holding out (under lay or clerical fanatics) for unalterable adhesion to old methods, there will be made a strong endeavour towards local union with all good Christians—with Christian people in every locality—after the model of Primitive Christianity.

Lastly, we stand for Local Church Government as of the essence of permanent freedom, and the best provision for needful reforms.

It is the belief of the Independents that Church fellowship in every place ought to be broad enough to include all practical and consistent Christians, and narrow enough to exclude all who, whether in theory or practice, offer violence to essential Christianity. In the Apostolic Churches there were many mistaken notions held by half-instructed converts to Christ; but the remedy was found not in ready excommunication, but in greater zeal on the part of those who held the doctrine of the Apostles. Morally bad men were expelled from the society, until they repented, as we see in St. Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians; but persons who erred on the question of the Resurrection were reproofed, and instructed in the truth; but not until they made a party for their error were subjected to discipline. A large local society receiving all practical disciples of Christ, and not limiting its numbers by the size of any building, is the surest guarantee for good fellowship, for practical good works, and for effective reforms. A local church might use several buildings, without sacrificing its unity. In the prospect of local and catholic union we find the only prospect of Christian reconstruction—a great society not dominated by distant sanhedrims, nor ruled by the traditions of a slavish and interested hierarchy, but permeated by all the currents of the best thought and the best purposes of Christian civilization. The people who live in puny gangs of sympathizers seldom have any sympathy to spare for those whom they regard as outsiders and heretics.

I believe that these statements, as far as they go, convey a true idea of the genius of Independency, but in some respects an imperfect one, since the missionary spirit is one grand characteristic of those Churches, which there is now no space to describe or consider.



# THE PLACE OF BAPTISTS IN THE EVOLUTION OF BRITISH CHRISTIANITY.

BY JOHN CLIFFORD, M.A., D.D.

## I.

ROTHE calls attention to the ominous circumstances that "the idea of the kingdom of God which occupies so prominent a position amongst the ideas of Christ falls into the background in the minds of the Apostles." The fact is as undeniable as it is grave. For one reference to the "kingdom of righteousness, and peace, and joy" in the letters of the New Testament, there are at least a dozen in the reported sayings of the Master. In some of the epistles, you are rarely out of hearing of the clanking and grinding of ecclesiastical or controversial machinery, whereas in the gospels, the kingdom comes without observation; its movements are quiet as the healing and life-giving light, gentle and noiseless as the growth of flowers and fruit. The Apostles are so engrossed with the pressing needs of the new societies they have founded, and so absorbed by the difficulties of working the new organizations they have set going, that although they never lose sight of their King or of His kingdom, yet they suffer the brilliant conception of the Divine rule of justice, mercy, sweet forgivingness, and brotherly love to pale its splendours before the mean moralities and mordant controversies of their first converts. Even Paul, who always construes history and life through his belief in Christ, and never through any Church theory or dogmatic system, does not escape these necessities; so difficult is it in our world for even capable and heroic men "to keep the heights the soul is competent to gain."

(2) That was the fateful beginning of a long and disastrous decline from the ideal of Jesus. The history of Christianity, British and universal, is through many a long chapter, the story of the contest for primacy between the idea of Christ as to the "Kingdom of God," and the ideas of men as to the Churches. The climate in which Christianity was born was so uncongenial that, to use the imagery of Renan, as the "new-born child emerged

from its swaddling clothes, a most dangerous sort of croup threatened to choke it." The air was laden with the miasma of ritualism and the vision of men soon became dim to the essential simplicity and dominant spirituality of the teaching of Christ. Priestism, that has never touched anything without corrupting it, thrust itself into the simple societies of disciples, and forthwith battles began concerning sacred orders and lordly hierarchies, theological systems and speculative opinions. Next came the tyranny of the intellect over the whole life in the form of Gnosticism; and men ceased to think deeply and practically about a rule of God, i.e. a rule of real goodness and purity, of sweet reasonableness, and tender compassion, of sustained righteousness and conquering obedience to the law of the eternal. Machinery was all in all, and love, and justice, and the service of humanity slipped more and more out of sight.

(3) But a hopeful change is, and has been for a long period, in progress. A true philosophy of history is coming into vogue, which definitely follows the method of Christ and gives primary rank to the kingdom, and only a secondary and subordinate one to the priests and controversialists, the sectaries and dogmatists. We are being carried slowly but surely back to the Gospel, and to the "Gospel of the kingdom," i.e. to Christ's way of looking at life, and thought, and progress, seeing them as they lie in His mind, and according to His ideal. For history is essentially humanistic and by no means ecclesiastical, cares little for doctrinal disquisitions and much for practical ideas and creative principles, ignores the fight for words and forms, and gives distinction to aims and ideals. It winnows the chaff from the wheat, the sense from the soul, the form from the reality, the high-sounding claims from the positive victories over sin and crime, disease and death. It is never sectarian, but always broad and deep as the purest love. It is not Baptist or Anglican, but human, and its insistent question is, "*What do ye more than others?*"—not what are your claims, your "articles," your "orders;" but what is your contribution to the actual needs of men, your ministry to the poor and weak, your impact and inspiration to unselfish service. This is the law of the final judgment, and it is sheer waste of time and power to care one straw about any other.

(4) Nor need the weakest who is true, and the most despised who is sincere, fear that judgment. A true philosophy of history is not unrighteous to forget any work that has in the slightest degree met the felt needs of man as he is in himself and in his relations to his fellows. History despises none of her intellectual or ethical forces, whether Catholic or Culturist, Anglican or Quaker, Comprehensionist or Separatist; but rejoices without stint in the

gift of all the sons of men, and assures us it would be as wise to ignore the tiny creatures that build up the coral islands of the southern seas as to pass by any one of these contributions to the spiritual fulness and wealth of the world.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, the life and work of Baptists is a valuable part of British Christianity, only so far as it has become one of the successive steps in which the human spirit has been forced onward by the immanent logic of the religious life in its organic development. Service to humanity in its higher ranges of life and work is the supreme test of the worth of Churches. No society can escape that judgment, nor can the most prosperous and popular community finally confuse it. Each Church must be made manifest according to its utterance of the "word," and offering of the service by which men and nations really live and securely advance towards their true ethical and spiritual goal.

## II.

It is of the first importance to keep in view this cardinal law, as we attempt to fix the place of Baptists in the development of our British Christianity; for it is notorious that Baptists have an extremely poor and inconspicuous place in the grand succession of majestic hierarchies and colossal system-builders that marches along the centuries. Baptists have done nothing for the methods and machinery of Christianity, unless it is that they have shown how immeasurably inferior methods and machinery are to intrinsic conviction, personal faith, and passionate devotion to high ideals. No elaborate organization bears our name. No towering ecclesiastical edifice has been built by our hands. No ornate and splendid ritual has come forth from our mint. No service, rich in its harmonies, prolific in mystic suggestion and entrancing and calming at once with blended song and prayer belongs to us. We cannot even claim to have created one homogeneous Baptist Church with graded officers, binding ceremonies, authoritative creed, and high pontifical dignitaries. Few great organizing personalities have appeared amongst us; and those who have arisen have had to confront tremendous difficulties in their building work. An Ignatius Loyola, vast as was his innate power of attracting and commanding men, could not have thriven on Baptist fare. The wonderful genius of the founder of Methodism, could never have reared his beneficent structure on our principles. Indeed, we are not, and cannot

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Dean Stanley in *Church and Chapel*, edited by R. H. Hadden, pp. xxxv., xxxvi.

become, a mere ecclesiastical corporation without disloyalty to the creative ideas and living convictions which gave us birth.

Of course we are not entirely without machinery, and in recent years a marked increase has slowly, and in the face of much suspicion, taken place. We have created a union for the churches of Great Britain and Ireland, in addition to the existing associations for counties, societies for missions, and for the education of preachers and various funds for helping the weak and needy. Our foreign missionary organizations have become colossal, widespread and reproductive. But our social unit is still held in its integrity to be that which was settled by the men of the seventeenth century, viz., a society of believers in Christ; a society self-contained, rigidly self-governed, and strenuously independent. In a certain characteristic way, we have assented to the saying of the philosopher Lotze that "mechanism is everywhere essential, but everywhere subordinate," but whilst the latter clause is affirmed with energy, the former is met with the inbred scepticism that watches the machinery with nervous dread lest we should be caught in its revolving wheels and lose our free and joyous life. Knowing how often organizations have become the iron sceptre of the theological or ecclesiastical despot, the Baptist has elected to diminish his immediate social efficiency, rather than risk his freedom to act according to his own conscience. • •

(2) Therefore the place of Baptists in British Christianity is not to be looked for amongst its compact synods and priestly assemblies, but in the neighbourhood of the humble and ignoble few who, single-handed or in small companies, have striven to increase the vitality of the intellectual and spiritual contents of Christianity by *glowing enthusiasm for ideas*. They belong to the men who, in the judgment of their practical contemporaries have been the vulgar and deluded victims of far-shining illusions, vacuous dreamers of impossible utopias, pinched fanatics who have disdained the bread of this world and nourished their faith and fortitude on airy and unsubstantial visions of God and duty. Ideas have made them, shaped their movements, fed their heroism in martyr flames, and inspired their quenchless zeal. Even the wild and frantic struggles of the Anabaptists of Holland were sustained by the notions—that, if God had a kingdom at all, it should be here on this earth, a boon to suffering men; that, His inspirations could not be partial, exclusive, limited to castes and orders, but must be free for all souls that sincerely sought Him; and when the General Baptists started into life in the first and second decades of the seventeenth century, it was under the magnetic spell of the doctrines of "Liberty of Conscience,"

"Freedom to worship God," "Salvation for everybody," the sovereignty of the soul in religion, and the absolute and unquestioned monarchy of Christ over the conscience and over all life.

"O Truth! O Freedom! how are ye still born  
In the rude stable, in the manger nursed;  
What humble hands unbar those gates of morn,  
Through which the splendours of the new day burst?"

(3) Is it not then one of the ghastly ironies of history that after three centuries of existence the one idea of the Baptists that has chief currency amongst outsiders is, that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries they were simple enough to give vitality on British soil to the ancient practice of immersion as the right mode of baptism—a symbol, it is commonly alleged by opponents, that in its Oriental home may have been appropriate and useful enough; but in the frigid North, and amongst reasoning Westerns, can never appear other than a "demoralizing fetichism"? Is it not strange that the popular label of one of the most anti-ritualistic and spiritual of societies should fix attention on a method and not on a conviction, on a form and not on an idea? It is a sad fate, and we must bear it as cheerfully as we can.<sup>1</sup> "Baptism by *immersion*," says the Rev. Brooke Lambert, Vicar of Greenwich, "is strictly no peculiarity of the Baptist sect. The rubrics of our Church (i.e. the Episcopal Church) make baptism by immersion the rule. It prescribes baptism by immersion, 'if they shall certify that the child may well endure it, but if they certify that the child is weak, it shall suffice to pour water upon it.' The exception has by custom become the rule."<sup>2</sup> Moreover, it is a needless and careless misrepresentation to assign the *motif* of Baptist existence to a rite in any sense whatever; for as a matter of historic fact they do not take their place in the annals of British Christianity from special interest in the form of a ceremony as such, but from those great formative ideas which are the impelling powers of our modern life,—ideas concerning the human soul and intrinsic religion; the human soul and personal liberty; the human soul and the province of the state.<sup>3</sup>

### III.

In order to verify that assertion let us glance for a moment at the wonderful "revolt" of individualism against authority in

<sup>1</sup> In an appendix on the different denominations in *Church and Chapel*, there are seven grave mistakes within the space of the first thirteen lines treating of the Baptists, pp. 99, 100.

<sup>2</sup> *Church and Chapel*, edited by R. H. Hadden, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Lazarus. *Flint's Philosophy of History*, p. 583.

Church and State, which fills so large a space in the annals of our race under the name of the "new birth or *Renaissance*." "Revolutions," it has been said, "raise questions." The Renaissance was, in this respect, singularly prolific, and not even yet are the authentic answers to those questions fully to hand. It was, in its larger and later issues, the awakening and regeneration of the intellect of Europe by the resurrection of the forgotten literature of the ancient world,—a resurrection disclosing a richer civilization, a clearer thought, a finer style, and a truer life; and becoming a mirror in which the men of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries saw themselves; a standard by which they judged their conduct and achievements, and a starting-point from which they went forward to secure the spiritual and political renewal of the world.

That recovered literature was Christian as well as classical, and carried men back to Jerusalem and Christ as well as to Athens and Socrates, so that the men who shrunk self-condemned, when they compared their corrupt life with classical attainment, could not withhold their censures from the professors and organizations of Christianity when they found their prodigious departure from the original purpose and plan of the Founder of the Christian religion. Indeed they asked, "Was it Christ's Church at all?" Did it breathe His Spirit? Was it doing His work? Ought they not to go back to Apostolic training as the only way of realizing at once the idea of Christ, the deliverance of Europe from death, and the fuller education of the human race?

At that time there was no question of equal gravity. It was the "blazing" subject of the hour. No topic required so much daring in those who handled it; so much steadfast heroism in those who were prepared to follow their answer to its legitimate issues. It was a new question, and it was as revolutionary as it was new. Merely to put it suggested to many minds the profanest hardihood, and lifted whirlwinds of scorn. Ineffably worse was it then, to ask, "Is the State Church the New Testament Church?" "Ought all parishioners to be Church members?" than it is to ask to-day, "Is there a God?" "Is the Bible true?" "Is Christianity historically verifiable?" And the men who put the inquiry had to be ready for banishment to the wilds of America, or the more genial refuge of Holland, or even for martyrdom, if the response they found carried them into opposition to the reigning notions of the hour, and to the State-supported and State-defended religious institutions of the day.

Do not let us disguise this fact. Whatever English Baptists may be and do *now*, it is certain their ORIGIN is *not* due to the

quiet investigation of two or three passages of Scripture concerning the way in which believers in Christ should be baptized; whether by sprinkling, by pouring, or by dipping; whether once or three times; nor to the rejection of infant baptism; nor even to the denial of the magical sacramental efficacy of baptism: it goes far deeper, and includes immeasurably more. The Baptist Church sprang into being, as other Churches did in that day—not from wild fanaticism; not from excessive vanity; not from questions of much or little water in a rite, but from unswerving loyalty to God; from a profoundly religious effort to form a *visible Christian Church after the idea and according to the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself*. It was a real human struggle for the realization of Divine ideas, born out of the love of God and the desire for the establishment of His reign upon earth. Baptist history is therefore a bush aflame with the presence of God, and the ground it covers is not less holy than that on which Moses, with bared feet, stood hopeful, yet trembling, as near to the God of Israel.

(2) The story of the origin of the British Baptists is then a fragment of the larger story, first of the Renaissance, and next of what we call the Protestant Reformation; and takes rank by the side of those thrilling chapters of our annals which narrate the work of John Wycliffe and his preachers, of the humanist Erasmus and Dean Colet, the separation of England from Rome, the appearance and mission of the Puritans, the rise and progress of the Separatists and Brownists, Independents and Quakers. Erasmus, the most brilliant representative of the humanistic culture of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, had issued, in 1502, his *Enchiridion militis Christiani*, "to counteract the errors of those who place piety in ceremonies and external observances, but neglect its very essence." To that he had added, in 1516, the Greek New Testament, through which men heard the Master Himself speaking as in the first days. By these and other publications, by lectures and letters, this unrivalled scholar and teacher was aiding in formulating the answer of the intellect and conscience to the question of the age, concerning Christ and the Church, in terms which excluded at once the Pope and the Papacy, sacerdotalism and ceremonialism, and all unreality.

Then came amongst us William Tyndall, fanning into a flame the smouldering embers of Lollardism, rousing into new and fuller life the recipients of the message of Wycliffe, by sending forth the New Testament in an English version, which in substance is still in use amongst us. It only needed that the capacious, passionate, and irresistible soul of Luther should be

set on fire and peal forth with its new energy through Europe like thunder echoing amongst Alpine hills, and Protestantism leaped forth, armed and weaponed for a war from which it can only cease when its work for man is fully accomplished.

(3) But the answers to the questions of the ages come slowly, and at the cost of much struggle, suffering, and blood. British Protestantism was at first a very sickly child. Royal, ecclesiastic, and theological nurses were so timorous of change, and so reluctant to part with the proved follies of the past, that they went far to destroy it. Therefore it was not long before there grew by the side of it, if not actually from it, a *second* Protestantism, with a sharper accent, a more decided ring, carrying the revolt against the paganized Christianity of the Papacy to a further extreme. The *first* protest was mainly against the *Pope* of Rome and his jurisdiction in these realms. The *second* protest was an endorsement of the first, but it went beyond it, and protested with even a stronger vehemence against copes, stoles, and altars, and the priestly dogmas, practices, and paraphernalia of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. Protestantism had inevitably protested itself into Puritanism. It must be so. Protestantism was essentially and centrally part of a return to the *Divine Original* of Christian faith and practice in the Scriptures; and once on that road, Protestantism could not be a finality. PURITANISM was the logical issue of the Protestant spirit, a clearer and more adequate solution of the problem of the hour. As Carlyle says, it was "one of the noblest heroisms ever transacted on this earth," and owed its rise to the direct appeal to the recovered literature of Paul and Peter; and its surprising energy and rapid progress were also due to the tremendous impulse given to the religious life of the nation, about the middle of Elizabeth's reign, by the circulation of those same Scriptures. The Bible became the chief literature of England; its fable and its history, its poetry and its philosophy, its manual of practice, and its guide and inspiration to devotion—so that Grotius said of this country, ten years after the Queen's death, "Theology rules there;" and Professor Green affirms that "the whole nation had become, in fact, a Church."<sup>1</sup>

(4) Is that the last answer to the question of the age? Has Puritanism, with its deep inwardness, strong idealism, and severe discipline, reached finality? No! "the coming life-cry is always on;" the humanistic, biblical and spiritual forces at work in the English nation, revolutionizing its religious ideas and practices, could not stop there. As the first protest led on to the second, so the second led on a *third*.

<sup>1</sup> *History of the English People*, 449.



Puritanism advanced to SEPARATISM. Bodies of men appeared who were unwilling to admit that the Church of England, even if reformed according to the Genevan pattern, was a true Church of Christ. A deeper Reformation was requisite than a change of dress and of ritual. *The terms of membership required alteration.* "It is contrary," said the Separatists, "to the will of Christ that the area of the Church should be fixed by the area of the land. We are profoundly convinced that the practical reform of the spiritual life of England can never be realized in connection with that parochial system of churches which considers all baptized persons to be redeemed children of God, until excommunication has furnished proof to the contrary." Thus a *third* form of Protestantism arose, more advanced than the second, and inculcating the necessity of forming "particular churches." Led by Robert Browne (an "erratic individual," according to Fuller and Masson), Henry Barrowe, Francis Johnson, John Penry, John Greenwood, and Henry Jacob, such separated churches grew exceedingly, and, according to Green, numbered 20,000 souls in the middle of Elizabeth's reign.<sup>1</sup> Some of these churches were called Brownists, after Robert Browne, and subsequently Independents, from their assertion of the sufficiency of the Church to care for and govern itself, and their death-defying insistence upon the principle that the Church of Christ ought not to, and could not, consist of any but those who were really believers in Him, and avowedly subject to His authority. They vehemently opposed the pernicious doctrine of sponsorship,<sup>2</sup> and would not accept the theory of Whitgift and Hooker, that the nation makes the Church, and that being born in a parish of the nation gives a right to be in the Church of Christ. Strongly, and even fiercely, they denounced the deed by which "in one day, with the blast of Queen Elizabeth's trumpet," ignorant papists and gross idolaters were made faithful Christians and true professors.<sup>3</sup> The unit of the Church of Christ is, and always must be, a Christian man.

(5) Now out of these Separatists, with their cardinal principle that the members of a New Testament Church should be Christians, grew logically and inevitably the ENGLISH BAPTISTS. The *first* protest was against Romanism as concentrated in a pope, and subjecting the king of this land to his authority; the *second* protest was against all papal practices, and in favour of getting rid of a prelacy and bringing in synodical authority; the *third* protest was against the inclusion of all the subjects of the king

<sup>1</sup> Green, *History of the English People*, 459.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. H. L. Dexter, *Congregationalism as seen in its Literature*, 77.

<sup>3</sup> Henry Barrowe's *Brief Description of the False Church* (1590), p. 10.

in the Church, irrespective of their spiritual character, and in favour, ultimately, of the self-governing powers of each separate Christian society; but still, INFANTS were included, at least the infants of Christian parents, and yet how could they be personally conscious Christians? how could they aid in the government of a Church? what spiritual character had they to qualify them for membership? It was certain as to-morrow that a FOURTH PROTEST should come. The forces of the living Word, and of their own faith impelled them to oppose the inclusion of any persons in the Church of Christ Jesus, excepting such as intelligently and consciously received Him, and were possessed of His Divine life. THAT FOURTH PROTEST WAS MADE BY THE ENGLISH BAPTISTS, AND IS THEIR HISTORICAL ROOT. To cite the language of one of these, they reasoned thus: "The Separation must either go back to England (i.e. the English Church), or forward to true Baptism; all that shall in time to come separate from England must separate from the Baptism of England; and if they will not separate from the Baptism of England, there is no reason why they should separate from England as from a false Church." Right as far as they went, yet the Separatists and Independents did not go far enough to satisfy these root and branch men. They had got firm grip of a principle, and they were willing to go with it wherever it might take them. They were contending for eternal realities. The battle was not about words, but spiritual facts. Christ Jesus was central to His Church, and a living personal and conscious relation to Him was the fundamental condition of fellowship in His societies. Personal faith in, and personal subjection to, the Lord Jesus, is all and in all. But faith is a conscious act. It requires intelligence. It involves will. It is not possible to a babe; therefore babes have no more right in the Church of the New Testament because they are born in a Christian family, than Englishmen have perforce a right in the Church because they are born in a Christian parish. The principle which excludes the parishioner allows no place to the babe. So they reasoned, so they felt and acted, and thus English Baptists came into being as a vital and enduring product of the great Protestant Reformation, and in fact advancing that reform a stage further than it had before marched, but along its own original lines of the pre-eminence of the Scriptures, and the absolute necessity of a really personal godliness. It was a logical and conclusive application of the governing rules and controlling spirit of Puritanism, carrying, if we may mathematically express it, Protestantism up to its fifth power, as a denial of the right of men to substitute any merely external conditions and accidental circumstances, for a living, sincere, and

real faith in Christ, and a hearty personal subjection to His august authority.

This, then, is demonstrated. Baptists are the last response but one given to the question of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, What is religion in its essence and spirit? That last answer being supplied by the "Friends" or Quakers who have abolished all ordinances and insisted on the exclusively spiritual nature of all religion and all worship. The genealogical tree of the British Christianity of those centuries may be labelled, so far as our present inquiry extends, Humanist in root, Protestant in bole; then the first branch is Puritan, the second Separatist, the third Independent, the fourth Baptist. Thus history energetically repudiates the dominant notion that the Baptist became a Baptist because he made much of baptism. It was the reverse; it was because he made *little* of it, and fixed the supreme emphasis on the inward and ethical qualification for the rite. It is not he, but the Romanist, who makes much of the act when he says in the language of the Council of Trent: "Whoever shall affirm that baptism is indifferent—i.e. not necessary to salvation—let him be accursed."<sup>1</sup> It is not he, but the Anglican, who makes much of baptism when he declares that that prophet-statesman of our age, John Bright, could not be a Christian because "he had not been made one by the Sacrament of Baptism, and to treat an unbaptized man as one who has been baptized is to regard that Sacrament as a sham." It is not he, but the Prayer Book, which says that baptism makes anybody "a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." The Baptist comes to his place in British Christianity in a great and sustained struggle for reality, sincerity, soul: for ridding religion of all sham and pretence, by insisting on personal faith, personal love, and mercy and justice, on pure aims and high ideals.

#### IV.

It is part of the irresistible logic of the spiritual life that those who have been so resolute in the assertion of the inwardness of religion, the inviolable sacredness of the human unit, and the unfettered sovereignty of the soul, should also contend for that soul's perfect freedom from all external authority, whether of creeds or churches, synods or states. The few Baptists who had taken their place in the "extreme left," and formed the beginning of the "Radical" wing of the Protestant host, were therefore in the likeliest position to catch first sight of the new conception

<sup>1</sup> Canon 5. Cf. also Canon 13.

of intellectual and religious liberty, swimming into the clearing heavens of the dawning century like a new planet through the stellar spaces.

It is the unequivocal testimony of historians, that Britain owes to Baptists what has been called "the noblest innovation of modern times," the idea of intellectual and spiritual freedom. I do not forget the great scholar Abelard, who was one of the earliest to maintain the principle of individualism against the authority of the Church, nor his famous pupil Arnold of Brescia, who in the twelfth century applied the principle of free inquiry to the claims of popes and bishops to exercise power as *secular princes*; nor the potent sway of those poet-humanists—Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio; but that able and fair-minded student, Dr. Gardiner, says in his recently published "History of the Great Civil War:"—

"Exposed as they were to contempt and persecution, the Baptists early rallied to the doctrine of a complete separation between Church and State. In 1612 or 1613, an English Baptist Congregation at Amsterdam, declared its belief that, "*the magistrate is not to meddle with religion or matters of conscience, nor compel men to this or that form of religion, because Christ is the King and Lawgiver of the Church and conscience.*" This idea firmly took root amongst the Baptists, and found expression from time to time in petitions and pamphlets, which were far more thorough in their claim that liberty of conscience was the right of all men than those put forward by the ordinary Separatists."<sup>1</sup>

Professor Masson, in his *Life of Milton*, says, referring to the above, this is "the first expression of the absolute principle of liberty of conscience in the public articles of any body of Christians." Thomas Helwise, who had the chief hand in drawing up this document, was John Smyth's successor, and he drew around him some unforgettable men. Leonard Busher, who published the first English tract on "Liberty of Conscience," in 1614, was one of his flock; and John Morton, who sent out a tractate entitled, "Objections Answered by Way of Dialogue, wherein is proved by the Law of God, by the Law of our Land, and by His Majesty's Many Testimonies, that no Man ought to be Persecuted for his Religion, so he Testifie his Allegiance by the Oath appointed by Law," was his assistant.

Thus, as Professor Masson says, "from a dingy meeting-house, somewhere in Old London, there flashed out first in England the absolute doctrine of Religious Liberty." And more decisively he says, "Not to the Church of England, however, nor to Scottish

<sup>1</sup> Dr. S. R. Gardiner, *History of the Great Civil War*, 1642-44, 336, 337.

Presbyterianism, nor to English Puritanism at large, does the honour of the first perception of the full principle of liberty of conscience, and its first assertion in English speech, belong. That honour has to be assigned, I believe, to the Independents generally, and to the Baptists in particular." There is no doubt, then, that the General Baptists may, in the face of the present evidence, keep their forward rank as the first promulgators of the absolute doctrine of religious liberty.<sup>1</sup>

(2) But to assess that service at its exact value, we must recall the ruling ideas and forces of parliaments and churches in 1612. Vast and far-reaching as were the changes introduced by the Renaissance and the Reformation, there was not a Protestant Church in Europe that had nobleness and love enough to find room for the principle of religious liberty or even of toleration of differences in religious belief and practice. Man most reluctantly parts with his right as a brute to persecute so long as he can. Somehow he will play the tyrant to the full length of his power, and if in the mutations of the ages he grows ashamed of the rack and thumbscrew, and the prison and the fire, he is surprisingly inventive, and deftly prepares numberless disguises for carrying out his inquisitorial tyranny. Even yet we have little more than full liberty to be religious after the fashion of the hour, and in accordance with the wish or whim of the majority. Dissent is still costly, and if you venture towards the dissidence of dissent, and the thorough-going practice of freedom in judgment and faith, you may expect to be assiduously pursued with unrelenting bitterness and unscrupulous hostility.

But in 1600 persecution rioted in all its brutal ferocity. Germany and Switzerland, England and Scotland inflicted civil disabilities on those who did not conform to the State-established Church. The Inquisition was victorious in Spain; the League in France worked for the extirpation of unbelievers. In England heresy was an offence punishable by death for 135 years after the Reformation, and it was not till 1677 that an act was passed abolishing the writ for burning heretics. Nor were the churches more enlightened. Even those who flung off the shackles of ecclesiastical bondage for themselves were busy forging fetters for others. The changes in religion were at first mainly changes in tyrants: a substitution for the infallibility they opposed of another not less self-willed, intrusive and persecuting; the

<sup>1</sup> "It is not only unmerciful, but unnatural and abominable; yea monstrous for one Christian to vex and destroy another for difference and questions of religion." "Bushier's Religious Peace; or, a Plea for Liberty of Conscience." Reprinted in Dr. Underhill's Tracts on "Liberty of Conscience, etc.," 1846, p. 24

removal of a pope and his cardinals to give room for a king and his clergy. They did not battle for liberty as liberty, but only for that liberty that enabled them to hold and teach what they pleased, and to repress and punish all who dared to dissent. Presbyterians shared the Romanist intolerance, and fought for a domination not less exacting so that they might get rid of those pestiferous people, the Papists and Baptists, the Quakers and Socinians. Milton read and interpreted aright the signs of the times when he said that "new presbyter was but old priest writ large." Calvin, a man intrinsically noble, building his theological system first, and interpreting his Bible afterwards, misses the Divine revelation of liberty, and shares the blind intolerance of the theologians and Christians of his day. Prynne embodies the idea and feeling of his time when he teaches that parliament is the creator of churches, and that a man is to be scorned who does not "make it a point of conscience and of Christianity to submit" to its authority.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, excepting the Reformer Castalio, there was hardly a public teacher who did not maintain that orthodoxy conferred an absolute right to kill the body of the unfortunate wight who was bold or foolish enough to question its infallible affirmations. Therefore, to discover in such darkness the sublime doctrine of spiritual liberty, and to promulgate it from the "little dingy meeting-house in old London," was to render a service to British Christianity and to the progress of man, not less opulent in noble and beneficent issues than the discovery of America by Columbus, or the invention of printing by Gutenberg,—it was to build a Pharos for all distressed ecclesiastical and theological mariners; it was to give an impulse to the total development of men by turning the stream of fresh and living thought on all the stock ideas of the world; it was to promote the inwardness of culture by the gift of a fitting atmosphere, and to add to the fulness and variety and energy of the intellectual and ethical life of mankind.

But Mazzini reminds us that not only does every great revolution demand a great idea to be its centre of action, to furnish it both lever and fulcrum for the work it has to do; but "incarnation in action" is also and equally necessary,<sup>2</sup> or else the incorruptible Word will not fructify in a large and nourishing harvest. Such incarnations were appearing and increasing in the Baptists and Independents of the time. John Smyth, the founder of the "General Baptists" in 1608-11, was first a clergyman of the Anglican Church, next a Separatist, then an Independent, and lastly an Arminian Baptist. A brave soul, of noble make and of

<sup>1</sup> Gardiner, *History of the Great Civil War*, ii. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Essays on Faith and the Future*, p. 24.

incorruptible sincerity, "broad as the charity of Almighty God, narrow as His righteousness," he was ready to follow truth wherever and to whatever of loss and suffering she might lead; and for him a joyous acceptance of that leadership meant life as an exile for conscience sake in Holland, where, breathing an atmosphere impregnated with the theological teaching of James Arminius, and the doctrine of toleration taught by the celebrated Dutch lawyer and statesman Grotius, he learnt in pain the truth that Helwise and Busher and their friends were to teach. Another Episcopalian, Roger Williams, infected with the "dingy meeting-house" doctrines, embarked for America in 1630, there founded the first Baptist Church in 1639, and was the first legislator who provided for free and absolute liberty of conscience. Dr. Gardiner, speaking of another hero of freedom, John Milton, says "his love of liberty was a high intellectual persuasion, not like that of Roger Williams which sprang from Biblical study undertaken under stress of persecution."<sup>1</sup> Hugh Peters succeeded Roger Williams as pastor of the church in Rhode Island, but coming back to this country in the time of civil war he became an army chaplain. He was a man entirely after the heart of that great Independent and stern warrior for liberty, Oliver Cromwell. He loved freedom "from the kindliness of a man of genial temper to whom a minute theological study was repulsive, and who, without disguising his own opinions, preferred goodness of heart to rigidity of doctrine." "Truly it wounds my soul," he said, "when I think Ireland would perish, and England continue her misery through the disagreement of ten or twenty learned men. . . . Could we but conquer each other's spirit, we should soon befool the devil and his instruments; to which end I could wish we that are ministers might pray together, eat and drink together, because, if I mistake not, estrangement hath boiled us up to jealousy and hatred."<sup>2</sup> Those were heroes who, like William Sawtry, Sir James Bainham, Richard Woodman, Anne Askew, Joan Boucher, Benjamin Hewling, and Elizabeth Gaunt, could die and never yield, suffer but not flinch from their faithfulness; fight for ideas and impossibilities, but not dull the keen edge of their enthusiasm, or dim the brightness of their hope. They were possessed of that "intrinsic conviction" described by John Morley as "the mainstay of human advancement," and like Bunyan were ready to reply to the judge who threatened hanging if they continued preaching, "If I were out of prison to-day, I should preach to-morrow by the help of God." Consequences! they cared not a jot for those that reached themselves so long as they were true

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Gardiner, *ii.*, p. 301.

*Ibid.*

to their conscience and their King. Safety! they scorned the mean cowardice that put that before duty :—

“ Bodies fall by wild sword-law ;  
But who would force the soul, tilts with a straw  
Against a champion cased in adamant.”<sup>1</sup>

“ . . . Men they were who could not bend ;  
Blest pilgrims, surely as they took for guide  
A will by sovereign conscience sanctified ;  
Blest while their spirits from the woods ascend  
Along a galaxy that knows no end,  
But in His glory who for sinners died.”<sup>2</sup>

## V.

It is impossible for me to trace in all its fruitful issues this regal idea. “Liberty of conscience” is not a phrase, but incarnate in men it is a force, and one of the most efficient in history. It springs from the value and possibilities of the individual man, and cannot cease in its creative and reforming work till it permeates all life—individual, political, social, and international—and fashions it in obedience to the great principle of soul-freedom. The men who, in the language of Froude, “assisted in their deaths to pay the purchase-money of England’s freedom,” did not foresee the range and elevation of their acquisitions. The total extinction of slavery of the body was in it; for if the higher faculties of conscience and will are free, by what right do the chains still hold the limbs? Hence those who had entered into the heritage of the Quakers and Baptists and Independents could not rank behind the most chivalrous and devoted warriors on behalf of the abolition of slavery in Jamaica, and all the colonies, and at last in the United States. Political liberty was in it,—“one man one vote,” aye, and “one woman one vote;” the sovereignty of the soul means personal obligation to promote the welfare of the body politic in its widest interests and ramifications. Social emancipation and social happiness were in it. Did not that Baptist, Hugh Peters, foresee our day when he said he had ever sought after three things: “First, that goodness which is really so, and such religion might be highly advanced; secondly, that good learning might have all countenance; and thirdly, that there may not be a beggar in Israel—in England”? Surely that last note in the army chaplain’s legacy gives him high rank amongst the earliest British Christian socialists!

(2) You will not imagine that I forget for a moment that Baptists have only been one regiment of the soldiers fighting for

<sup>1</sup> *Ecclesiastical Sonnets*, Wordsworth, Part III., No. 7, p. 63.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 13, p. 67.



these victories. I merely keep to my text, but with a deep sense that the debt to our predecessors and allies is immeasurably great; and specially to those nearest us—the stalwart and aggressive Independents on the right and the quietly invincible Quakers on the left. All I have striven to show is that the place of Baptists in the evolution of British Christianity is:—

First, that of fearless warriors in the struggle for reality and personal responsibility in religion; and that to that struggle they owe their partial detachment from the religious organizations in the midst of which they were living.

Secondly, that of leaders in the conception and promulgation of the glad tidings of freedom from the interference and control of state and ecclesiastical authorities.

Thirdly, that of fellow-workers for the emancipation of the slave, the uplifting of the lower races, and the improvement of the social condition of mankind. I have said nothing of the contributions made to British Christianity by the theologian Andrew Fuller,<sup>1</sup> and by the re-creation of foreign missions by William Carey in the last century; nor yet of that superlative wealth of character in the host of nameless saints, members of Baptist churches, and heroic toilers for the redemption of men and the destruction of all evil.

“The healing of the world  
Is in its nameless saints. Each separate star  
Seems nothing, but a myriad scattered stars  
Break up the night and make it beautiful.”

(3) Nor have I said anything about the future. I know little about it. It is affirmed that all ecclesiasticisms, chemically speaking, are in a state of decomposition, and I cannot deny it. Fortunately, “the loudest beating of the drum will not check the rising of the sun.” The energy of the Renaissance is not yet spent. The Reformation waits still for its completion. The simple ideas of the Christianity of Christ are full of revolutionary power, and need living application to the legislative, commercial, and social life of the world. In that work Baptists ought to have a large share, and the larger because our task, in so far as it relates to the exposition of New Testament baptism, is nearly done. Exegesis is wholly with us in teaching that baptism is not more and not less than an outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual grace and loyalty to the Lord Jesus, a loyalty of which the recipient of baptism himself is really and dimly conscious. Priestism, apparently growing and nourished by the materialistic and æsthetic fashions of the hour, has lost for ever its basis on the Scriptures and the traditions of the

<sup>1</sup> *Contemporary Review*, vol. liii., p. 510.

Early Church. The return to the Christ of the Testament is delivering the Churches from the blinding doctrine of the magical efficacy of sacraments and sapping the inward forces of sacerdotalism. Baptists to-day are as loyal as ever to the supremacy of the spirit and to freedom of conscience; as emphatic as of old in proclaiming personal responsibility; more resolute in their repudiation of ritualism, word and thing; more emphatic in their recognition of spiritual and ethical affinities as the basis of Church fellowship; more eager than ever to have their windows open to all the daylight, to secure perfect religious equality, and to promote the true brotherhood and social well-being of men:—

“ Spirit of Freedom, on,  
And pause not in thy flight,  
Till every clime be won  
To worship in thy light ! ”

## THE QUAKER REFORMATION.

*BY WILLIAM POLLARD.*

THE Founders of the Society of Friends, in the seventeenth century, were accustomed to say that the aim of the Reformation movement in which they were engaged was the Revival of Primitive Christianity. By this they did not mean a mere imitation of the practices and arrangements of the Early Christians, but a revival of that spirit of simple genuine unclerical religion that was so characteristic of the first century. They felt that the Christian Church had grievously lapsed from the pure and primitive faith. The great Central Truth of Christianity—the Real Presence of the Spirit of Christ in the hearts of His followers—had come to be almost ignored. The free spiritual Republic that Christ had instituted had been largely supplanted by the despotism and tyranny of a human priesthood. Externals had taken the place of spirituals. Forms had replaced realities. Observances had been substituted for duties. Elaborate metaphysical creeds had been gradually constructed and made the test of orthodoxy, because it was more in accord with priestly aim and worldly nature to profess faith in theological doctrines and outward ceremonies, than to seek after and obey the Spirit of Christ. Even the great upheaval of the Reformation in the sixteenth century had, as they believed, by no means removed these evil growths. Startling and wide-reaching as the Reforming movement had been, both in Germany and England, it was of necessity very imperfect. Even the Great Leaders of that movement were far from seeing all the beautiful simplicity and breadth of spiritual Truth, as it had been recognized in Primitive days. The times were ripe for another advance toward the simple practical Religion of Christ, and George Fox was manifestly called by God to lead in the work.

Fox has been fittingly called “the last of the Reformers.” His aim was to complete what the earlier Reformers began: what the Puritans had in some respects carried forward, but which still remained unfinished;—the Restoration of Primitive Christianity.

George Fox was born in 1624; so his youth was passed at a

most eventful time in English History, when it seemed doubtful whether the Government would go on—as it had done for ages—gradually developing into a limited and constitutional monarchy, or would sink into a Despotism.

In his early boyhood there was for years no Parliament; there was no free speech. Heretics were remorselessly hunted in almost every parish in the kingdom. Those were times to set men thinking; and no doubt they helped in no small degree to ripen and develop the character of young George Fox. We will glance briefly at his after life and teaching, that we may sketch in outline his view of what Primitive Christianity required.

Fox was a man of wonderful natural endowments; and though with no more scholastic instruction than the middle classes of his day enjoyed, yet he had a mind of no ordinary powers, cultivated too in a particular direction in a very remarkable manner. The knowledge of God, not as a mere intellectual speculation, but as the true solvent of that mystery, human life—the true Restorative that would harmonize and guide and give spiritual power—was the great object of his longing search from youth to manhood; and in this search his almost constant companion was the Bible.

But though the volume of inspiration was most precious to him, he could not be satisfied, or rest with it alone. He loved it, because it revealed the Divine Helper,—the Christ of God;—to whom he longed\*most intensely to come, that he might have Life, and might know both Truth and Duty. For this end he agonized for months in solitude,—he read,—he prayed,—he made earnest inquiries of men who were thought to have Christian experience: but still no light came. As Spurgeon says, “Fox was driven at last into the dreadful wilderness of self-despair, and made to see the dark chambers of imagery of his own natural heart.” And then, in God’s own time, the Revelation came. Fox’s own record of this momentous crisis in his life is deeply touching and instructive. He says,—“When all my hopes in men were gone, so that I had nothing outwardly to help me, nor could I tell what to do, then, oh! then, I heard a voice which said, ‘There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition;’ and when I heard it, my heart did leap for joy. Then the Lord let me see why there was none else that could speak to my condition, viz., that I might give Him all the glory; that Christ might have the pre-eminence, who enlightens and gives Grace and Faith and Power.”

The Divine Comforter who thus revealed Himself spoke to a willing and longing heart; and from that time forth—though his discipline was by no means over—George Fox grew to have an apostolic faith in the real Presence of Christ.

This young man of nineteen became shortly so filled with his new life, that he says he could have wept day and night with tears of joy;—and he was soon called to proclaim his great discovery to others. Thus, with the heavenly anointing manifestly resting upon him, he entered upon his mission as a religious Reformer;—commissioned to bring back to the Church a long-lost and forgotten Truth. “I was commanded,” he says, “to turn people to that inward Light, Spirit and Grace, by which all might know their salvation, and their way to God; even that Divine Spirit which would lead them into all truth.”

With persuasive eloquence Fox began now to call men from “forms and shadows,” to the life, light, and power of Christ in their own hearts. Numerous converts speedily united with him in the great Reforming work, many of them as devoted as Fox; and it is important to note that their primary ground of union—(as officially stated by the London Yearly Meeting)—was, “agreement of sentiment in regard to Christ’s inward teaching.”

George Fox formulates still more definitely the nature of His mission in the following words:—“By the power and Spirit of God, I was to bring people off from all their own ways, to Christ the new and Living Way: and from the churches which had been gathered in the wisdom of man, to the Church of God of which Christ is the Head. And off from the world’s teachers made by men, to learn of Christ, of whom the Father said, ‘*This is My beloved Son. Hear Him.*’ And off from the world’s worship, to know the Spirit of truth in the heart, and to be led thereby. And I was to bring people off from Jewish ceremonies, and from men’s inventions, and worldly doctrines; and from their rudiments and creeds,—with their schools and colleges for making men ministers of Christ. And from all their images, and crosses, and sprinkling of infants; and all their vain traditions, which they had gotten up since the Apostles’ days, which the Lord’s power was against. And against all who preached, and not freely, as being such as had not received freely.”

It would, however, be a mistake to suppose, from this statement, that the Quaker Reformation was a mere protesting movement, or a system of negatives. On the contrary, it began, as already pointed out, with reviving a great fundamental but forgotten Truth;—that of the Real Presence of Christ by His Spirit. This the Friends have happily kept in the forefront of those grand “Advices,” which are periodically read in their meetings. It is the same truth so well expressed by William Penn, when he said,—“*The Light of Christ within us, as God’s gift for man’s salvation, is the great Fundamental of our Religion.*”

We are therefore justified in saying that George Fox’s procla-

mation of the Primitive Faith was based on the assertion of a *supreme* and *positive* truth, and not on mere negations.

He found the religious world divided between High Church professors, who based their faith largely on Church traditions—and the Puritan and “Evangelical” parties, who believed in the exclusive authority of Scripture. All these were making the Death of Christ the central truth of Christianity, to the displacement of a broader and more scriptural view. They were in fact almost entirely ignoring a truth which Fox felt to be *the main Factor* in the relations of man to God. Fox had discovered—had had revealed to him—that it is the indwelling Spirit, the Living Christ, and not the Church, nor the Bible only (or even primarily), which is the real Restorer and Guide of Life. He had reached out to a Living Person who is Divine, and he could rest no longer on a Book, or a Creed.

Stephen Crisp—another of the founders of the Society—refers to the same discovery when he says,—“There are two kinds of Faith. The one says, ‘I believe, because good men have told me, and because I find it in my Catechism and Prayer Book.’ The other says, ‘I believe, because God hath visited me by His Love, and given me a personal assurance that He is my Deliverer.’”

Charles Kingsley proclaims the antiquity of this great Quaker principle in the following words. He says:—“The doctrine of Christ in every man, as the indwelling Word of God—the Light who lights every one who comes into the world—is no peculiar tenet of the Quakers;—but one which runs through the whole of the Old and New Testament; and without which they would both be unintelligible! just as the same doctrine runs through the whole history of the Early Church for the first two centuries, and is the only explanation of them.”

The historian Bancroft says:—“The mind of George Fox arrived at the conclusion that Truth is to be found by listening to the Voice of God in the soul. This principle contained a moral revolution. It established absolute freedom of mind (under the rule of Christ)—treading idolatry and superstition under foot, and entering the strongest protest against every form of hierarchy.” It is in this sense that we may say in the words of the poet—of that bright dawn of spiritual truth and liberty of which we are speaking—that

“Freedom reared in that august sunrise  
Her beautiful bold brow:  
When Rites and Forms before her burning eyes  
Melted like snow.”

But when we speak of this great doctrine of Primitive Chris-

tianity and of Quakerism as fundamental truth, it is not to be understood that it is the only truth of importance. On examination it will be found—when held in its true sense—really to include or to lead on to all the great Facts referred to in the Apostles' Creed: for, as promised by Christ, it leads into all truth. Our knowledge of God is progressive. Truth comes to us by degrees: largely according to faith and faithfulness. This was what George Fox meant, when he said he was called “to bring people to Christ, and to leave them there.” He knew that when a man had come in faith to this living Christ, he would seek more and more to learn of Christ, and to obey Christ, and to promote the cause of Christ:—that he would honour and love the Bible, which testified of Christ;—that he would rejoice exceedingly and increasingly in the assurance he had, through God's manifestation and sacrifice in Christ;—that he would feel the need and privilege of Prayer and of waiting on this gracious Lord for fuller enlightenment in the truth, and for guidance and help in all the concerns of life.

It was George Fox's faith in this principle of Christian growth and development, that explains the well-known story about William Penn and his sword. The incident may be briefly recalled to memory, somewhat thus:—William Penn, in the early days of his changed life, though full of zeal for the Gospel as he then knew it, had not yet seen all the bearings of the great Truth which he had embraced. He had thrown himself heart and soul into the work of the Lord. He was preaching and writing continually, and was full of Christian activity. But he still wore his sword, after the fashion of the gentlemen of those times; and possibly thought little about it. The appearance of the young Christian soldier girt with a carnal weapon scandalized some of his elder Friends, who remonstrated with him about it. Penn, in his perplexity, sought counsel from his friend and leader, George Fox; and told him he had not seen the inconsistency of the thing, and did not wish to take any step out of mere imitation. Fox's advice was simple and courageous. He said,—“As regards thy sword, wear it as long as thou feels easy with it.” He had faith in the meekness and gentleness of Christ, and in the power of the Master to imbue His young disciple with His own Spirit; and he knew it was wise to leave growth and development in the hands of Him who is patient and all-wise;—who alone sees the capabilities of His servants, and the right time for leading them forward.

And so we find this great Fundamental Truth of a living and present Saviour underlying all that the early Friends taught. It was this that gave the unique character to their meetings for

worship. It shaped and guided their ministry. It was at the root of all their testimonies, and their service for the Truth. It was to them the Power and Reality of the Gospel. It was "God's gift for man's salvation." And the reason is not far to seek. It meant to them the one Foundation, on which prophets and apostles and Primitive Christians had built: *Jesus Christ*.

In view of this mighty fact, they might well ask,—“What need is there of a human priest, or a professional pastor, at the head of the congregation, when the Great High Priest—the Minister of ministers—is Himself really present? What need is there of a symbolical washing by outward water, when the real cleansing is applied direct to the soul by the Divine Baptizer Himself? What need is there of a formal ceremonial with outward bread and wine, when the soul is invited to the real table of the Lord, to partake of the veritable Bread of Life?”

It was well said of George Fox, that he did for Religion what Lord Bacon had done for philosophy:—he rescued it out of the hands of the school-men (in this case the theologians), and showed it to be practical! Those who have looked much into works on Systematic Theology—Calvinistic or other—must have been struck by the contrast there presented, with the practical and unsophisticated character of the old Quaker teaching. It may be said of the early Friends—as Erasmus said of the Primitive Christians—that they were afraid to pronounce anything about God but what was plainly revealed in Scripture. The Bible was their creed, interpreted by the Spirit of Christ, and they owned no other.

But the teaching of Fox and his coadjutors was not only practical. It was pre-eminently simple; and it was broad;—and this simplicity and breadth reached to the very beginnings of Religion. The Protestant Theology of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—in which many of the early Friends had been trained—had been accustomed to say,—“When you are converted you will find God propitiated, and He will accept you for Christ's sake.” But the Quaker theology took a totally different stand. It said,—“God is on your side before you start: and He is,—by persuasion,—by the work of His Spirit,—seeking to start you Himself; and *Christ is the manifestation of His love, and not the cause of it.*”

A recent writer, in treating of the Quaker Reformation, has formulated the principles therein proclaimed, and has called them the “Ten Talents of Quakerism.” They may be summarized somewhat thus:—

1. God's Spiritual Light that lighteth every man.
2. The indwelling of the Spirit with the disciple.



3. The Headship of Christ in His Church.
4. The priesthood of all believers.
5. The freedom of the Gospel Ministry.
6. The spiritual equality of the Sexes.
7. Spiritual Baptism, and Spiritual Communion.
8. The unlawfulness of war to the Christian.
9. The unlawfulness of oaths.
10. The duty of brotherly love ; and of simplicity of life.

The list even in its bareness indicates the striking resemblance that existed between the Primitive Church and that of the early Friends,—as to their creed,—the character of their religious meetings,—the basis of their ministry, and their views on Church Government. They both accepted in all its fulness the truth of the Real Presence and Headship of Christ : they were both free from the burden of Ritualism and Ceremonialism, and from the bondage and hindrance, in any form, of an order of clergy. They were both remarkable for their brotherly love, and for their care of the poor, the suffering, and the unfortunate.

The religious meetings in Apostolic times, though held on the same spiritual and free basis, took doubtless a somewhat different shape from the Quaker meetings—for reasons that are obvious. They were composed mainly of people just gathered out of heathenism, who had had practically no religious training ; and the meetings had, therefore, of necessity, to be largely devoted to the work of “teaching.” That is, they sought in various ways, under the power of the Spirit, to remind and inform one another of the great Facts of Religion, and of God’s dealings and revelations to men in the past : and this teaching-meeting was generally followed by a social gathering or “Love Feast,” for spiritual edification and devotion.

We may mention another point of comparison. There were some of the teachings of the early Friends, which, while really constituting part of the Quaker Reformation, were more of the nature of testimonies, specially belonging to that particular age. Such were doubtless based upon true principles into which these faithful disciples were led by the Spirit of Christ. But we have to remember that the application of principles may and does vary under the same Divine guidance. It had been so with the Primitive Christians. They had their strong testimony to bear about meats offered to Idols ;—against the use of blood ; and so on. But these expressions of a true principle have long passed away, with the need of them. Though the injunction on these subjects was given to Gentile Christians, in the most solemn and unqualified terms (Acts xv. 28), no believer, Gentile or otherwise, feels any longer bound by it.

So with the early Friends. Admitting that there may have been in their protests against certain evils and extravagances of the time some degree of crudeness and exaggeration—for instance, in the use of what they called plain and truthful language; on the subject of dress, and personal demeanour;—and in respect to some recreations;—still they testified in their seventeenth-century style to some important truths that may now be upheld in other ways. In these things we have our own responsibility; which is not met by mere imitation.

We sometimes hear Quakerism described as if it were identical with what is known as “Evangelicalism,” plus a few specialities about the Ordinances, War, and Oaths. On this point we may appeal both to the early Friends, and to their contemporaries the “Evangelicals” of the seventeenth century;—and we shall find the answer from each clear and unmistakable. Leaders of the “Evangelical” sects in those days—such as Baxter and Bunyan—never would admit that the fathers of Quakerism were in harmony with themselves as regards even primary Christian doctrine. They stigmatized them as *one-sided*,—as *tending to Socinianism*—as *undervaluing the Bible*, and so on;—charges which one still hears at times applied by “Evangelicals” to old-fashioned Quakerism: though more unfounded statements as regards each particular, both then and now, could hardly be made. So far from being one-sided, they proclaimed afresh the *central* truth of Christianity. Their testimony to Christ, as Almighty and Divine, was a practical testimony;—and as such it was more definite and unequivocal than that of any other religious community. And their reverence and love for the Bible were so marked, that its plain teachings were accepted by them at great cost and suffering, on points respecting which other churches seem still “halting as between two opinions.”

The Friends themselves—on this question of agreement in what were regarded as Fundamentals—were equally uncompromising. While they gladly avowed that they did not differ materially from many other religious communities, in what William Penn called “the common doctrines of Christianity,” they did not hesitate to assert that they differed almost radically in the definition—the understanding—and even in the place of some of these teachings.

The “Evangelical” sects—as we have already pointed out—declared, and still declare, their central truth to be the Death of Christ. The early Friends, going wider and deeper, proclaimed the great central and foundation truth to be Christ Himself;—the Living Saviour—the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. They ignored no revealed truth;—the human life of Christ—His death—His

resurrection—His ascension—all for our sakes—they thankfully accepted and believed. But Christ the Living—the Indivisible,—He who had been God manifest in the flesh, and now is God manifest in the Spirit,—was their foundation Rock. And on that Rock they built, and found safety and rest.

One characteristic achievement of the Quaker movement which is of primary importance was the rousing impulse it gave to individual Conscience. Christ—as these Reformers preached Him—was not only present in the Church as its Head, but He was present in the heart of each disciple. Therefore the Conscience—that wonderful organ or indicator, by which the Divine Presence is noted and its purpose revealed—was not to be a mere collective Church Instrument, interpreted and controlled by the priest or pastor, or even by the congregation; but a personal indicator, under Christ's direction, planted in the secret of each heart. Under this Divine Guidance, people were to think for themselves—seek for themselves—and act for themselves. And yet not as mere detached and isolated units. The one Supreme Guide who dwelt in each soul, and understood and loved each soul, became—as He was trusted—the true bond of union to His people. This practical faith in Christ's direct revelation of Himself to each believer—as it is held in humility and charity—is still found—even amidst great diversities of operations—to give true unity of purpose and an aggregate of wisdom; and so enables the Brotherhood to work harmoniously together for mutual help, and for the promotion of the truth. Here we have the true constitution of that union of many diverse spiritual natures, under the Headship and control of one Lord,—which we recognize as a Divine institution, and which we call the Church.

A Church that felt itself so constituted would naturally be continually saying to its members—(in other words, the members would be continually saying to one another)—“Christ is your Master:—take heed to Him:—take heed to His invisible and unsearchable influence,—the convictions of the Spirit,—the guidance and teaching of the Spirit,—the restraints of the Spirit.” And the early Quaker Church *did* constantly reiterate this teaching. George Fox's epistles, and the addresses of his compatriots, are full of such injunctions. The supremacy of Conscience, controlled and enlightened by the Spirit of Christ, was in fact their prominent theme.

Personal Conscience was the rudder which, in the Divine hand, steered their bark through the stormy sea which these brave men had to traverse. In obedience to it they went forth as Preachers;—they held meetings;—they organized communities for promoting God's truth;—they went to prison;—they laid down their lives;

proving faithful to this Light of Christ in the Lamp of Conscience, even unto Death.

But further than that, they did their duty, and were seen to do their duty, in the petty details of every-day life. Perhaps this is as great a test of a tender and active conscience as can be found. George Fox tells us,—“When people came to have experience of Friends’ honesty and faithfulness,—that they kept to a word in their dealings, and would not cheat them; but that if they sent a child to their shops for anything, they were as well used as if they had come themselves,—the lives of Friends did preach, and reached *the witness of God* in the people. Then the inquiry was, ‘Where is there a draper, or shopkeeper, or tailor, or shoemaker, or any other tradesman, that is a Quaker?’”

Another quiet, but invaluable characteristic, springing from the same root, and which has already borne good fruit,—but which needs to be much more cultivated in the world of politics and daily life,—is the absence, or at least the diminished power, of the spirit of self-seeking and of mere personal ambition. Oliver Cromwell testified to it as something unusual, when he said of the Friends,—“Here is a people whom I cannot win with gifts, honours, office, or place.” John Bright once referred to the same characteristics when he said,—“I am a member of a small but somewhat remarkable sect,—a religious body which had a remarkable origin, and in its early days at least a somewhat remarkable history. It is, of all the religious sects, the one that has most taught the equality and equal rights of man. And I venture to say it is remarkable for another thing;—that, probably more than any other body, within its borders and in its service, personal ambition is practically unknown.” John Bright adds,—“I think much of my opinions, and much of my course, have been determined or at least greatly influenced by the training I received in that body.”

This active personal Conscience, which leads to a true self-reliance based on the assurance of Christ’s presence and help, was the root of that sturdy independence of character which was once (and which is still, to some extent, let us hope) a distinguishing feature of Quaker people. It has been through this true staying power so much needed in the battle of life, that the individual conscience has come to tell upon the whole community. Probably when George Fox spoke of one true Quaker shaking the country for ten miles round, he had in view not merely or mainly preaching, or other public efforts; but rather this integrity and uprightness—this unswerving fidelity to the truth however manifest in the soul,—this conspicuous loyalty to Christ, which brought about the whole movement. We read that some Scotch

earl, who had been dealing with certain of these uncompromising Friends, said,—“The Quakers’ loyalty is a qualified loyalty: *it smells of Rebellion.*” To which one of them calmly replied, “We understand not loyalty that is *not qualified*: qualified that is, with the fear of God, rather than of man.”

And so this individuality—this unqualified loyalty to Christ,—told upon the Church and the nation in many important ways. For the Church the Quaker movement did much, by its broad teaching, to dissipate or at least to moderate the narrow Calvinism that prevailed in most of the Protestant communities. For the nation it won for us all Liberty of Conscience. “The struggle to secure this was carried on through forty years of bitter suffering, marked with many cruel martyrdoms, and the early Friends ultimately triumphed by the might of passive resistance wearying out persecution; and so they purchased for England the priceless jewel of religious liberty.”

To the brave and good soldiers who fought in this long and arduous struggle, we may apply the words of an eminent writer, and say: “They were true patriots. They developed another kind of deliverance for their country, founded on the authority of Truth. They stood up against Tyrant and Priest. They witnessed against false social maxims, against superstitions, against all that was enslaving the soul. They proclaimed a living God; and they sought in all things to be faithful to their King.”

## THOMAS CHALMERS.

BY THE REV DAVID FOTHERINGHAM

(Of St. John's Presbyterian Church of England, Tottenham).

ON entering the Firth of Forth, with the view of landing at Leith or Granton, which are the seaports of Edinburgh, a passenger on board a steamer may easily observe, on the low-lying coast of Fife, a small town named Anstruther. Though it was once a royal burgh of considerable magnitude, it has now fallen into decay, and the memory of its former importance is chiefly perpetuated by a Corporation that is out of all proportion to the number of inhabitants over whom it exercises jurisdiction. In the year 1831 there was a public functionary for every six houses in Western Anstruther, yet it was sarcastically remarked that instead of such magistrates being a terror to evil-doers, evil-doers were a terror to them, and that their authority might be transferred, with advantage to the public, to a couple of constables.

The burgh is, however, redeemed from obscurity by a variety of circumstances which some people might attribute to the chapter of accidents. It was the abode of a character whose exploits are narrated in a popular ballad, composed in the Scotch dialect, and described by Burns as "a precious model of imitation,—sly, sprightly, and forcibly expressive."

It was also the birthplace of a distinguished Oriental linguist, who, in the early part of this century, gave it celebrity in a poem of considerable merit, called "Anster Fair." But the chief glory of Anstruther now is that it was the native town of the man whose life forms the subject of this lecture.

Thomas Chalmers was descended from a family of great respectability, which had been connected with the county of Fife during several generations. His own father was a dyer, shipowner, and general merchant, and the character of the man appears from the style in which he intimated the birth of the child, who afterwards shed lustre on his name, to a brother-in-law then living in London. This was in the month of March, 1780: "I convey to you the agreeable intelligence of my dear Elizabeth being safely delivered of a fine boy on the morning of Friday, the 17th. The little fellow is named Tom—I wish him as good a man as his name—

father. I hope the Almighty will recover the mother to serve Him, and be helpful to bring up her own children to be His servants, after we have served our generation according to His will, which will may it be the rule of yours and mine, and all belonging to us, to live agreeably thereunto." In these sentences we detect the genuine ring of an ardent Puritan. It was the desire of the good man's heart to order his life according to the will of God, and in his prayer that the youthful Tom should emulate his godfather there was the wish that he should prove to be a sincere Christian, adorning the doctrine of God in all things. The gentleman in question was Mr. Thomas Ballardie, a man of deep but unaffected piety, with whom the father frequently took counsel in divine things, and who passed to heaven some years afterwards, while upon his knees in prayer.

In the home of his early days young Chalmers found religion commended by example as well as by precept, and it was no doubt from the impressions made on his mind at this time that he ultimately decided to enter the ministry of the Gospel.

As a boy Tom was noted for his love of fun, and, as he was courageous to the last degree, he was frequently the leader of his companions in games and exploits which depended for their success on strength or daring. It is mentioned, however, to his credit that his fun never degenerated into the mischief by which others suffer, and that he was absolutely free from the twin vices of falsehood and blasphemy.

From the early age of three he attended the Burgh School, but unfortunately the chief teacher was a man past his prime, and the scholars did not derive great benefit from his instruction. Under the lax discipline of this seminary, Tom acquired careless habits of preparing his home lessons, and was frequently incarcerated in a dark coal-hole for his indolence. It was observed, however, that when he did apply himself to any task he mastered it with a celerity and a thoroughness which none in his class could approach.

In this way the happy days glided by till he attained his eleventh year, and then he was withdrawn from the care of the master from whom he derived so little benefit, to be entered as a student of St. Andrews University.

It sounds strange in our ears to hear that a boy between eleven and twelve should join a University, but in those days there was no entrance examination at St. Andrews, and consequently many youths, fresh from the Parochial Schools, joined the Arts Classes, and had to be instructed in the very rudiments of the Greek and Latin tongues. During his first and second sessions young Chalmers made no figure as a student. His time was chiefly spent in boyish amusements, in some of which he maintained a

superiority over his companions from the fact that he was left-handed.

During his third year at College he began the study of Mathematics, and by this subject, usually regarded as dry and uninteresting, his youthful mind was completely fascinated. From this time, instead of being regarded, as formerly, as one of the idlest and dullest of students, he applied himself with ardour to the work of his classes, and soon gained the foremost rank among his competitors.

Like sunrise in a southern clime his intellectual birth had not been heralded by any previous dawn, but when the new life awoke it shone with a power and a brilliancy which could not escape observation. Chalmers remained five years longer at the University, attending the classes required to qualify him for the Ministry of the Established Church of Scotland, and in all these he gained more or less distinction, but his love for Geometry and cognate branches never grew cold. As it was in this field he first reaped his laurels, so it was by constant devotion to the same subject he maintained his high reputation for industry and ability. The esteem in which he was held appeared when he applied to the Presbytery of St. Andrews for licence to become a preacher of the Gospel. It was not the practice to grant this authority to anyone under twenty-one, whereas the youthful aspirant for the honour on this occasion was only nineteen. Some of the grave divines doubted the expediency of admitting one so young to the solemn office of preaching, but a friend in the Court pleaded that he was "a lad o' pregnant pairts," and, as this character could not be disputed, a concession was made in his favour.

It was not, however, from the love of proclaiming the unsearchable riches of Christ that Chalmers was so eager to become a Licentiate of the National Church. He coveted this distinction rather that he might use it as a stepping-stone to an appointment, as a Professor of his favourite science, in one of the National Universities. Though he made several attempts in this direction, his efforts were not crowned with success till he had reached his twenty-second year. At this period he had a double favour from his *Alma Mater*. The church of Kilmany, a parish only about nine miles distant from St. Andrews, became vacant, and, as the presentation to the living rested with the Principal and Professors of the University, they unanimously conferred it upon him. At the same time, as the Professor of Mathematics was unable, from ill health, to perform the duties of his office, he appointed Mr. Chalmers to act as his assistant. The dream of years was now, therefore, fulfilled. The Academic Halls were open to him as an instructor of youth in a science which he dearly loved; and, as



he possessed the art in an eminent degree of drawing the students into sympathy with himself, in the work of the class, they were roused to an enthusiasm equal to his own, and made unprecedented progress under his care. His qualifications for professional duties were thus clearly indicated, and though, from jealousy on the part of his superior, he was not continued in the subordinate position, in which he had first made trial of his gifts, yet the reputation which he acquired was fully sustained by a private enterprise which he conducted at a later period outside the College walls, and in spite of the University dignitaries.

Mr. Chalmers was ordained to be minister of the parish of Kilmany, in 1803. Notwithstanding his great intellectual ability he was in many respects poorly furnished for the duties of his spiritual office. The work itself was not congenial, and, besides, though he had attended the prescribed course of study at the Divinity classes to qualify himself for the Presbyterian pulpit, he had been too absorbed in his scientific pursuits to give the subject much attention.

He had not, however, shunned it altogether. He had approached Theology on its philosophical side, and had speculated deeply on some of the grand problems which it presents for consideration. At one time he was carried away by the gorgeous generalizations, as he afterwards described them, of Baron d'Holbach, and narrowly escaped being landed in a slough of scepticism—doubting both the being of a God, and the foundation of morality amongst men. From this forlorn fate he was saved, but for several years his views on Theology were restricted to the sublime idea which he caught from Edwards' book on the Freedom of the Will—the magnificence of the Godhead and the universal subordination of all things to the one great purpose for which He evolved and was supporting creation.

Though his sermons were not greatly relished by his plain parishioners, he was much esteemed for his personal worth, and, in consideration of his scientific attainments, was regarded by them as a kind of wonder. He lectured familiarly to them on Chemistry, showing, among other things, the powers of the bleaching liquids. On this one old lady was heard remarking to another: "Our Minister is nothing short o' a warlock; he was teaching the folk to wash clothes without soap," which provoked the retort: "Aye, woman, I wish he wad teach me to mak' parritch without meal."

Towards Mr. Chalmers' thirtieth year a series of events occurred which produced a profound impression on his mind, and ultimately led to that great change in his life and character which he never hesitated to describe as a *conversion*. One of these was a severe illness, which brought him to the very brink of the grave

another arose from the deaths of several relatives, which induced the belief that he would soon follow them to the silent tomb; and the third was an engagement to contribute an article to an encyclopædia on the "Evidences of Christianity." While occupied with this work he became so deeply convinced of the Divine origin of the Holy Scriptures, that he began to read them for his personal profit, and learned the claims which the Heavenly Father had on his love and services. In these solemn circumstances he subjected his former life to a careful review, and the result was pre-eminently mortifying. Whether tried by the standard of his own conscience, or the Word of God, he found, in the language of the Prayer Book, he had done many things which he ought to have left undone, and he had left undone many things which he ought to have done.

In the case of a man of his decision of character to be convinced of error led to an immediate attempt at amendment. Accordingly he set a watch alike on all his thoughts and actions, keeping a record of his falls with the view of walking more uprightly in the future. Soon the register reached proportions of which he had never dreamt, and in consequence the truth gradually dawned on his mind that it was his nature itself which was corrupt and needed amendment, and not merely the fruits which it produced. His own description of his mental struggles is thus given: "For upwards of a year he had striven with all his might to meet the high requirements of the Divine law; but that law rose in its demands as he rose in his endeavours, and it still kept ahead of him with a kind of overmatching superiority to all his efforts. His attempt to scale the heights of perfection, to quell the remonstrances of a challenging and not yet appeased commandment was like the laborious ascent of him who, having so wasted his strength that he can do no more, finds that some precipice still remains to be overcome, some mountain-brow that scorns his enterprise, and threatens to overwhelm him." Continuing this narrative, his chief biographer adds: "He struggled hard to recover his immeasurable distance from that high and heavenly morality which the law required, and, after all, he found himself 'a helpless defaulter from the first and greatest of its commandments.' He repaired to the atonement to eke out his deficiencies, and as the ground of assurance that God would look upon him with a propitious eye; but, notwithstanding, an unappeasable disquietude hung heavy upon his heart, and he walked among the elements of uncertainty and distrust till at last he came to see that the Saviour had already and completely done for him what with so much seriousness, but with so little success, he had been striving to do for himself."

The book which, next to the Word of God, was instrumental in guiding Chalmers in the way of peace, was Wilberforce's *Practical View*. He writes regarding it: "I remember that, somewhere about the year 1811, I had Wilberforce's *View* put into my hands, and, as I got on in reading it, felt myself on the eve of a great revolution in all my opinions about Christianity. I am now most thoroughly of opinion, and it is an opinion founded on experience, that on the system of 'Do this and live,' no peace, and even no true and worthy obedience, can ever be attained. It is 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' When this belief enters the heart, joy and confidence enter along with it. The righteousness, which we try to work out for ourselves, eludes our impotent grasp, and never can a soul arrive at true or permanent rest in the pursuit of this object. The righteousness, which by faith we put on, secures our acceptance with God, and secures our interest in His promises, and gives us a part in those sanctifying influences by which we are enabled to do with aid from on high what we never can do without it. We look to God in a new light; we see Him as a reconciled Father; that love to Him, which terror scares away, re-enters the heart, and, with a new principle and a new power, we become new creatures in Jesus Christ our Lord."

From these extracts it appears that Chalmers now heartily embraced all the truths peculiar to the Evangelical faith. The cardinal doctrine of this creed is—Salvation by the grace of God alone through faith in Jesus Christ. The centre of its Theology is contained in the testimony of our Lord: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved. He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." From this vantage-ground the Evangelical divine surveys the whole sweep of things—past, present, and future; and observing the adaptation of this plan of redemption to sinful and suffering men, proclaims it as God's Gospel to the world.

Jesus Christ, the God-Man, in taking our nature, identifies Himself with the human family in such a way that He has infinite sympathy with them in their sufferings, and makes Himself answerable for their transgressions. In His life He has left them a noble example, and by His death He delivers them from condemnation on account of their sins. Nevertheless, to reap the full benefit of His life and work they must be brought into union

with Him as a living and personal Saviour. The golden links by which this connection is formed are twofold. On His part it is established by the gift of the Holy Ghost, and on theirs by simple trust in His name. Through this union they are conformed to the Divine image, and are entitled to all the privileges of the children of God. This is also the true basis of their Christian activity and philanthropy. They abide in Him as the branch in the vine; their spiritual life is nourished by His grace; they are filled by His Spirit; they are constrained by His love; and, relying on His help, they order their own lives in accordance with His will, and do good to others as they have opportunity.

To some, this theory of reconciling earth and heaven, or even of raising men from the degradation into which they have fallen to a purer and nobler life, may appear narrow-minded and contracted. It may be some excuse for those who take exception to this system, that Chalmers was at one time strongly opposed to it himself. The burden of his early discourses was morality, and he did not conceal his dislike to the works in which the doctrines of grace were expounded. Bending over the pulpit, as a mark of emphasis, he remarked to the parishioners of Kilmany: "Many books are favourites with you which I am sorry to say are no favourites of mine. When you are reading Newton's *Sermons*, and Baxter's *Saints' Rest*, and Doddridge's *Rise and Progress*, where do Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John go to?" It was different, however, when he came to study these Divines under the shadow of an unsatisfactory life, or in the light of a near eternity. Finding no solid ground of peace himself in the ethics which he had strongly commended to others, he was driven of necessity to plant his foot on the rock which is Christ. Nevertheless it was only by slow degrees that he accepted the Evangelical faith as infallible truth. Accustomed by his scientific training to require proof for every proposition submitted to his judgment, he did not yield to the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel from mere traditional authority, but searched for the evidence on which their claims rested. He began his examination, as we have seen, with a prejudice rather inconsistent with a philosophical cast of mind, but by degrees it was dispelled, and then he discovered that the temple, which he imagined to be a baseless fabric, had foundations which could not be shaken. This was enough for a man with a broken spirit. It was here he found refuge for his troubled mind, for, in resting simply on Jesus as his all-sufficient Saviour he entered into a peace, as well as joy, passing all understanding.

But the Evangelical faith which revealed Christ to him did more than heal his bruised heart. He found the doctrines

could be compacted into a system as harmonious as any of the sciences intended to explain the operations and laws of nature ; and, therefore, since in its speculative, as well as in its practical, aspect it fully met all the demands of reason and conscience, he embraced it with all his soul and strength.

This was the turning-point in his career. He had now a centre from which to operate, and an object for which to live. Walking in fellowship with his newly-found Saviour, his genius, his eloquence, his energies, and his learning, were all consecrated to His service.

From this period his spiritual work absorbed his chief attention, and the fruit became at once apparent in the extraordinary popularity of his ministrations. He had now reached the vigour of manhood, and had an easy command of a style well suited to the massive cast of his thoughts. It appears to us to be turbid and cumbrous, but it possesses the cadence requisite for rhetorical effect, and he wielded it as an instrument of singular potency. His mode of reasoning was of the cumulative order. He delighted to seize the main point of an argument, and as he presented it in different lights, but always with fresh wealth of statement and illustration, it glowed with ever increasing brilliancy, and carried persuasion to every mind. His oratory may indeed be fitly compared to a mountain stream of his native land,—now foaming in a ravine or dashing over a precipice, but with the mighty rush of its waters, sweeping every obstacle before it, and then majestically flowing towards its destination.

Lord Jeffrey, the celebrated Edinburgh reviewer, remarked : “ His speaking reminds me more of what one reads as the effect of the eloquence of Demosthenes than anything I ever heard.” Another competent critic, relating his own experience of Chalmers’ preaching, says : “ It was a transcendently grand—a glorious burst. Intense emotion beamed from his countenance. I cannot describe the appearance of his face better than by saying it was lighted up almost into a glare. The congregation, in so far as the spell under which I was [held] allowed me to observe, were intensely excited, leaning forward in the pews, like a forest bending under the power of a hurricane, looking steadfastly at the preacher, and listening in breathless amazement.”

The first effects of his Evangelical sermons were felt by the parishioners of Kilmany. As he now laboured among them with apostolic zeal their apathy to Divine things passed away, and there was a visitation, on a minor scale, like the Pentecost of the Early Church. Stricken in heart by a conviction of sin they came to Him crying, “ What must we do to be saved ? ” Chalmers would have been well content to spend his days in this secluded parish,

guiding anxious inquirers in the ways of peace and holiness, but his fame was now noised abroad, and it was certain that sooner or later he would have to enter on a wider field of usefulness. He accordingly accepted an invitation to take the oversight of one of the parishes of Glasgow, and he removed to that city in the year 1814. The reputation which he had acquired in his rural parish did not wane in the commercial metropolis of Scotland. Doctors and lawyers, merchants and University professors, flocked to his ministry, and every Sunday he preached to a densely packed congregation, which hung upon his lips and drank in every word he uttered.

Besides the direct spiritual good which he accomplished, one effort of his ministry deserves special notice. It lifted up the Gospel of the grace of God and compelled all men—gentle and simple, learned and illiterate, to do it homage. This was the case especially with the philosophers of his day. In this respect he was a genuine representative of the Presbyterian Ministers whose ranks he adorned; and they are indebted to him for showing the attitude which they generally assume towards Science. Regarding Religion not only as supernatural, but also as the product of human experience, he contended that it rested on data as carefully observed as any of the facts on which the systems of Natural Science are built up. To man, indeed, nothing can be more certain than the operations of his own mind; and Chalmers' religion was the outcome of a mental transition of which he was no less conscious than of his own existence. He was not ashamed, therefore, to declare it, and he called on every Scientist who was loyal to the principles of the Inductive Philosophy to give him credit for sense and sincerity. In the same spirit he respected their conclusions. He honoured them as fellow-labourers in the search after truth, and rebuked those who, in the name of Religion, disparaged their honest speculations. It was in this spirit he addressed the students of St. Andrews regarding Geology. He said: "There is a prejudice against the speculations of the Geologist which I am anxious to remove. It has been said that they nurture infidel propensities. By referring the origin of the globe to a higher antiquity than is assigned to it by the writings of Moses, it has been said that Geology undermines our faith in the inspiration of the Bible, and in all the animating prospects of immortality which it unfolds. *This is a false alarm.* The writings of Moses do not fix the antiquity of the globe. If they fix anything at all it is only the antiquity of the species. *It is not the interest of Christianity to repress liberty of discussion.* It has nothing to fear from the attacks of infidelity. It should stand to receive her in the proudest of attitudes—the attitude of

confidence in its own strength, and, animated by the remembrance of the triumphs which it has already gained in the battles of controversy. God knows we have little to fear on the side of infidelity. It is not here that we are to seek for the point of alarm. What Christianity has most to fear from is—the bigotry of those who have brought religion into contempt by throwing over it the deformity of an illiberal and contracted superstition.”

And just as he approved of the speculations of those Geologists who confined themselves to their proper sphere of observation and induction, he also welcomed the researches of the Astronomer. He even preached a series of discourses on the connection between the discoveries of Astronomy and the Christian Religion, and when they were afterwards published they were as eagerly read as the most popular novel of the day.

Resolved to attend to all the duties of a Parish Minister with as much care as the Incumbent of a sparsely peopled District, his life in Glasgow was an unusually busy one. He visited the families one by one and collected statistics on their social, moral, and spiritual condition. He had also meetings with them in their homes, and established Sunday Schools for the instruction of their children. But the work by which he is now chiefly remembered as a Parish Minister is associated with the efforts which he put forth for the *economical support* of the poor. He was much dissatisfied with the method of relieving indigence from the public rates. It was his firm conviction that it not only destroyed a spirit of self-respect on the part of the poor themselves but also deprived the Church of the exercise of one of its spiritual functions. He contended that it was the duty of the Church to take this work in hand, and expressed his belief that a sufficient number of voluntary helpers could be found to carry it out with efficiency.

To enable him to try his experiment he was transferred at his own request to one of the most densely populated parishes in Glasgow, with liberty to bring his plan into operation at his own pleasure. It is gratifying to know that his predictions were amply fulfilled. For every fifty families he had a competent visitor, and such was the success attending their labours that whereas an annual outlay of £1,400 had been required from the rates for relief, £280 of voluntary aid were found sufficient for the same purpose. This was not only a triumphant achievement: it was also a great practical demonstration. It showed the way by which legal machinery and rates for relief might be dispensed with all over the kingdom, and it was a loud call to every clergyman to go and do likewise. But ministers were apathetic, and as statesmen also scoffed at the Christian scheme as a Utopia

never to be realized, provision from the rates for this object has now been made obligatory by Act of Parliament, and all the evils which the sagacity of Chalmers foresaw, and which he strove to avoid, have followed in its train.

Chalmers resigned his charge in Glasgow in the year 1823. All ranks and classes in the city loved and honoured him. The Senatus of the University had conferred on him the degree of D.D.; the merchant princes had supported his philanthropic and missionary enterprises; and the common people, revering him for his condescension and benevolence, had listened to his counsels, and, in many instances, by his persuasion had turned from the error of their ways. They could scarcely believe that he would forsake them. But his resolution was unshaken. In the hidden depths of his mind there lay a desire to fill a Professor's chair, and the opportunity now occurred of accepting an appointment to teach Moral Philosophy to the students of his *Alma Mater*, St. Andrews University.

Many thought he was making a sacrifice, both in dignity and usefulness, by descending from the pulpit to be an instructor of youth, but he had a nobler conception of the importance of the post than his critics, and therefore resisted their endeavours to retain him in the active duties of the ministry. His own view of the case was put in a homely way to Alexander Paterson, his first convert at Kilmany. Sandy, as the Doctor familiarly called him, was grieved to think that the pulpit was to lose so much eloquence and spiritual power, and plainly stated his mind to his former minister. Sandy was well acquainted with the process of producing salt, and so, coming down to his level, the Doctor said, "Sandy, is it the man that makes the salt, or the man that sells it that is the more important?" Sandy hesitated an instant, and then cautiously replied, "I suppose it is the man that makes it." "Well," added the Doctor, "I am to be the man that will make the salt, and others will sell it." Feeling discomfited, Sandy rejoined, "In that case the sooner you are in the salt pans the better."

Dr. Chalmers only held this appointment for five years, exchanging it for another more after his own heart—the Professorship of Theology in the University of Edinburgh.

Here he was in his proper sphere. He was surrounded with young men who flocked to him not only from all parts of Scotland but from many distant countries. They admired his genius, they were swayed by his eloquence, they revered him as a father, they imbibed his spirit, and they were indoctrinated into his views. Hence, when they were sent forth as ministers they preached the Gospel of the grace of God with an unction and a



power which revealed the stamp their teacher had left upon their minds. For eighteen years he was employed in that work, and during the whole of that period his classroom could be fitly compared to a fountain from which streams of blessing issued for the healing of the nations.

This was the labour most congenial to his own tastes, but his mind was frequently distracted by other duties assigned to him by the Church of which he was a devoted servant.

For awakening enthusiasm among the masses and concentrating their combined efforts for some purpose of practical utility there is no organization to be compared to a Presbyterian Church. It possesses a pure form of Republican Government, and as the members of its Supreme Court are generally in touch with the people it legislates in harmony with their views. The Chief Court of the Church of Scotland is styled the General Assembly, and of this body Dr. Chalmers was invariably a member. It does not appear that he was ambitious of any office, but there were occasions on which he addressed the House, and the weight of his counsels was generally acknowledged. One subject that lay near to his heart was Church Extension. Though the population of Scotland had more than doubled during the eighteenth century there had only been sixty-two new places of worship added to the National Establishment, and this increase was totally inadequate to meet the needs of the people. In the large towns there were many who had fallen away from Church ordinances, and their number was rapidly increasing. According to the views which were then prevalent it was the duty of the State to provide and endow new churches from the National Exchequer, and a Committee which the Church of Scotland had appointed to prosecute this work had approached various Ministries to solicit aid for their scheme, but were always doomed to disappointment. Of this Committee Dr. Chalmers was appointed chairman in the year 1834, and, being in earnest himself, he infused new life and vigour into all their movements. He also approached the Legislature, asking aid, that his Church might be better equipped for her spiritual work, but finding he could not get it except on condition of surrendering the Church's independence, he turned scornfully away, and made his appeal in a quarter where it was listened to with respect. As yet the liberality of the people had scarcely been evoked in favour of a spiritual enterprise. It was like a mine of virgin ore waiting for the touch of the magician's wand to bring it into view, and the man that first discovered it and brought it into play on a large scale was Dr. Chalmers. He fully availed himself of the machinery of the Presbyterian Church Courts, through which a pulsation issuing from the centre, like blood from the heart, ultimately reaches

every member of the community, but in addition he traversed the greater part of the country in person, speaking at public meetings and preaching on behalf of his scheme as he had opportunity. The result was an astonishment to himself. He tried this appeal as an experiment, and in less than seven years a sum of £300,000 was contributed for the object he had in view. With this amount two hundred and twenty-two new churches were added to the National Establishment, and they remain to this day as monuments of his love, his wisdom, and his self-sacrificing labours. This splendid success inspired him with new faith in the Christian people, and paved the way for a greater enterprise, which was even then looming in the future.

It has been already explained that from the democratic character of the Presbyterian form of Government there was generally a deep feeling of sympathy between the leaders of the Church of Scotland, and the communicants within her pale. In this respect she differed very much from the Sister Establishment in England. This divergence does not arise from accident, but from a radical difference of opinion as to the origin and rights of the Christian Minister. According to the Episcopalian theory every man who receives ordination from a Bishop, in the true line of Apostolic succession, ceases by that act to be a layman and becomes a Priest, with a right to accept a living and administer ordinances to the people under his spiritual care. Hence the distinction between the clergy and the laity, and the contention that there can be no Church where there is not an episcopally ordained Priest.

According to the Presbyterian theory this order is completely reversed. Our principle is that wherever there is a company of sincere believers there is a true Church, and wherever there is a true Church it is the privilege of the members to choose any brother, duly trained and accredited for the office, to be their guide in spiritual things. The invitation thus addressed to him is technically styled a Call, and lies at the basis of any rights which may afterwards be accorded to him. In all regularly constituted churches the Call is followed by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, but this ordination is not regarded as constituting a new order, or conferring any special grace. It is rather held to be a solemn designation to a spiritual office, and a public admission to functions which the people had previously invited the brother to perform.

It will thus be seen that the Call formed a vital part of every ministerial settlement, and that any attack made on it was subversive of one of the cardinal principles of the Presbyterian polity. Nevertheless, on the restoration of Patronage in the reign of Queen Anne, there arose a party in the Church known in history as the

Moderates, who affected to regard the presentation by the patron as the essential condition of ordination, and treated the Call as a mere formality. The effect of this policy was a series of conflicts between patrons and congregations, through which the cause of religion was greatly injured, and there were also secessions by which the Church was much weakened. The tide turned in 1834, when the Moderates were found to be in a minority, and the Evangelicals, with Chalmers as their most prominent representative, came to the front. The Church was really groaning at this time under the yoke of patronage, and the new leaders immediately devised measures to give the congregations relief. They might have agitated for a repeal of the Patronage Act, or they might have forbidden Presbyteries to ordain any man who had not received a legitimate Call, but desirous of dealing with extreme cases, in the first instance, they decreed that ordination should only be withheld when the majority of male heads of families in a Parish took the strong step of *formally objecting* to the Presentee. Notwithstanding the mild character of this change, which was called the Veto Act, it brought the Church immediately into collision with the Civil Courts. The Presentees against whom the congregations revolted were generally unscrupulous men who did not hesitate, when Presbyteries declined to ordain them to vacant walls, to invoke the arm of the State to compel them to go through this farce. The highest civil tribunal in Scotland at that time consisted of twelve judges, and was called the Court of Session. By a majority of two it declared against the necessity of a Call previous to ordination and ordered the Presbyteries, under heavy pains and penalties to proceed with this solemn ordinance simply on the ground of the Patron's presentation.

Now, as ordination is not a civil duty, but a religious privilege, the command to administer it by a Civil Court was clearly an encroachment on the spiritual independence of the Church, and this gave occasion for controversy directly between the Church and the State. The Court of Session proceeded with great violence in the exercise of its claims,—even going the length of casting one of the most eminent Evangelical Ministers into prison for disregarding its mandates,—and as it was upheld in its arbitrary measures by the Houses of Parliament, to which an appeal had been made for redress, it became plain that the Church had either to sacrifice the independence which was dear to her, or sever her connection with the State altogether. It was a stirring time, and Scotland resounded with the din of controversy from one end to the other, but as the crisis became acute all eyes were turned to Chalmers as the one man capable of leading his followers to victory. He was by this time venerable from his years, and still more so from his

white hair and grave appearance, but his eye was not dim nor was his natural force abated. As usual he had been slow in making up his mind, but as he looked at the question on all sides the issue became abundantly clear. It was not a petty squabble between this presentee and that congregation, like air-bells floating on the surface of the stream, but it was a great principle that was at stake. It was nothing less than the spiritual independence of the Church which he dearly loved. For that principle patriots had bled and martyrs died; for it, too, the best ministers of Scotland of a former generation had relinquished their homes and died in obscurity and poverty in foreign lands, and he felt that he would be a traitor to truth and to God were he not to defend it in the hour of peril. For this reason he girded on his armour and joined in the conflict. His speeches produced a tremendous impression. His enemies were discomfited, his supporters were encouraged, and many of the neutral host, halting between two opinions, abandoned their reserve and arrayed themselves on his side.

But while he reasoned and persuaded, he did not forget that some wise method should be adopted to bind together and support the men likely to follow him into the wilderness. It had been cynically declared that when the crisis arrived there would not be more than half a dozen found to relinquish their livings and their homes for conscience' sake. But he had confidence in men as well as faith in God, and he was not disappointed. To provide from four hundred to five hundred places of worship, to support the Ministers who were to occupy them, and, at the same time, to find salaries for teachers and stipends for missionaries, every man of whom was an evangelist, was a herculean task. But the leader was equal to the emergency. He planned that system of ecclesiastical finance now well known over the world as the Sustentation Fund, by means of which contributions are gathered from the area of the whole Church into a central bureau, and thence distributed in equal proportions to all the Ministers; and its machinery was ready for action whenever it might be required. The house was therefore prepared, but it was a question with some whether anyone would come to occupy it. The State had been inflexible in binding the yoke of Erastianism on the neck of the Church; would the Church be equally resolute in throwing it off? The hour struck. It was on the morning of the 18th of May, 1843. The General Assembly was convened. Amid intense excitement the members took their seats, and the church in which they met was densely packed with spectators. The retiring President, or Moderator as he is styled in Presbyterian circles, after devotional exercises, read a lengthy document containing reasons for dissolving the connection between the Church and the State; and

when he had laid the same on the Clerk's table, and bowed to the Queen's Commissioner, he moved with calm dignity from the chair, and the Fathers of the Church, who were its strength and glory, followed him. "The immense audience looked on, thrilled with feelings which it is impossible to describe, but not a voice, not a whisper, was heard. The sensation was too deep for utterance; but at last it found vent, not among females, but among strong-minded men, in tears." The example of the Fathers was followed in quiet succession by the rank and file of the Evangelical Party. "One entire side of the Assembly and the whole of the cross-benches were left untenanted; and those who remained gazed upon the empty space as if they had been looking into open graves." This was the Church of Scotland's farewell to Patronage and State coercion. Meanwhile, how fared it with those who had shaken the dust off their feet as a testimony against their oppressors? In a slow and solemn procession, headed by Chalmers, they were wending their way, amid the shouts of an admiring crowd, to a commodious hall in another part of the town, and there *in the name, and by authority alone of the Lord Jesus Christ*, the first Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland was constituted. As was meet, Dr. Chalmers was chosen Moderator, and he materially assisted in completing the organization on which he had been engaged months before. It was found that four hundred and seventy-four Ministers had resigned their livings to cast in their lot with the Free Church; and for their support, during the first year, the new fund which Chalmers had created yielded £366,719. To this Sustentation Fund, originated to take the place of a State Endowment for the maintenance of the Clergy, were added schemes for the support of Foreign Missionaries, the erection of Churches, and the spread of Education. His hopes were not altogether realized, but, considering the times, the response to his calls was marvellous. The money flowed in at the rate of £1,000 per day; and from the central exchequer a modest competence was paid, even the first year, to every labourer who had cast in his lot with the Free Church. In this respect that Church was like a mighty river even at its birth. It had no knowledge of a day of small things. Chalmers foresaw all its wants, and for its needs he made ample provision. Nor was it in any narrow spirit that he laid the foundations of a structure on which others would be required to build. He did not sacrifice to party an iota that would benefit mankind. His plans were consequently of a comprehensive character, sufficiently elastic to be adjusted to changing circumstances, and capable of indefinite expansion. And the result has amply justified the wisdom of his arrangements. Half a century has not yet elapsed since the memorable Disruption, but the congregations of the

Free Church have in that time been more than doubled, and her annual revenue has been trebled. She has now over eleven hundred places of worship, and the freewill offerings of her people exceed £600,000 per annum.

But it is not in Scotland alone that the triumph of his schemes to maintain the spiritual independence of the Church is so completely vindicated. In their success lies the true solution of one of the burning questions of the day—the possibility of maintaining a free Church in a free State. When the cry against State Churches was first raised, Chalmers was the champion that was summoned to the rescue, and the irony that sometimes attends fate was shown in his case also, inasmuch as it was from his hand that they received the blow from which they are staggering to their fall. On the day of the Disruption, the death-knell of all Established Churches was rung, and their severance from the State is now only a question of time.

Dr. Chalmers did not long survive the Disruption in which he had borne such a distinguished part. It was in the month of May, in the year 1847, while the General Assembly of the Free Church was holding its Annual Meeting in Edinburgh that he entered into his rest. Some time in the still hours between the Sabbath evening and Monday morning death overtook him while he slept. When he was called there was no response; and, on an attendant entering his bedroom, his hand was found to be heavy and his brow cold, but otherwise the body bore the expression of perfect peace and quiet rest. Apparently without either pain or conflict his spirit departed, returning unto God who gave it.

Great was the shock, and still greater was the sorrow, with which the melancholy news was received in all parts of the Christian world; but in Edinburgh, where so many Ministers were at the time convened, and where he was peculiarly revered, the grief was inexpressible. At his funeral there was no pageantry to dazzle the spectators, yet it was estimated that more than a hundred thousand persons joined in the procession, and it was amidst their tears that his remains were conveyed to the Grange Cemetery, and there committed to their kindred dust. It was thus that the men of his own generation showed their estimate of his eminent services, his great abilities, and his personal goodness; and on a calm review of his life we cordially confirm their testimony.

By the aid of the statuary and the artist the lineaments of his grave face and manly figure have been traced in a variety of forms, but it is not thus only his memory will be preserved. His spirit breathes in the new age of which he was a distinguished

pioneer; his name is associated with great movements which have extended to the remotest parts of the habitable globe, and the stamp of his genius has been indelibly engraven on institutions which are closely interwoven with the best type of the Christian Church, and are likely to endure so long as truth needs to be preached and men require to be saved.

## THEISM.

*BY THE REV. CHARLES VOYSEY, B.A.*

I HAVE been courteously invited, as the minister of the Theistic Church in London, to set forth and explain the principles and beliefs of Theism. In order to enlist your sympathy with the subject at the outset, and to inform those of my hearers who know nothing about it what it is they are now asked to look at and to examine, I will as briefly as possible give a summary of the Theistic principles and beliefs.

The Leading Canon is: That it is the right and duty of every man to think for himself on matters of religion.

No other man, however illustrious; no book, however venerable or precious; no Church or sect, however ancient, dominant, or arrogant, may be used as an authority, binding in any degree upon the individual mind or conscience.

The Second Canon is: That while all professed knowledge of God is partial, defective, and comparatively very small, such knowledge may be increased, corrected, and refined by the proper use of our faculties; and that as generations to come may successively advance in intelligence, enlightenment, and virtue, they will make progress likewise in the knowledge of God.

The Third Canon is: That all knowledge of God whatever must be based on natural facts—on certain indisputable facts in the outer and physical phenomena of Nature, and on certain indisputable facts in the nature and faculties of man; on these latter as the interpreters of the former. Under this Canon, the corollary is drawn that no beliefs of Theism can ever be at variance with the exact and demonstrated conclusions of true Science. Between true Science and true Theism there can be no collision.

These are the main principles of Theism, by which as a system of religious belief it must be always guided and controlled.

The beliefs are very simple and few:—

1. A belief in one only God, who is Supreme over all the universe in power, wisdom, and goodness.

2. A belief that everything is now ordered and working for the best, and that the final issue will be entirely good, to the satisfaction of every creature capable of sensation and thought.



3. A belief that as our having life at all here is the result of the love of God towards us, that life will be continued for ever in such other conditions as God may see to be best for us.

4. The belief in a God like this is no barren opinion or intellectual conviction, but a very powerful and constant stimulant to the highest virtue and to brotherly love among men. Whenever it takes hold on the heart, it gives patience and fortitude under the trials and perplexities of the world, it purifies all our pleasures, and fills us with a joyful hope.

Theism is, then, a belief in a God whom we can thoroughly trust and love, and whom to obey is a delight; a belief based on indisputable facts, and capable of expansion and elevation with every addition to our knowledge and with every rise in our moral nature.

You now have before you, I hope stated with clearness, the subject we have to consider this afternoon.

First, a few words in reference to the name Theism. In some respects it is unfortunate, because it is only intelligible to persons who have a certain amount of education. It is not at once clear and definite to the ignorant, as the English equivalent "Belief in God" would have been; but I am not responsible for its adoption. I found the word already established in literature for the very ideas and beliefs which I had come to hold on quite independent grounds.

The earliest use of the term Theism which I have been able to discover, is in the works of Lord Bolingbroke, although he and kindred writers in his day were called "Deists" not Theists: a most fortunate fact for us, because our Theism differs from some of their Deism even more strikingly than the Deists differ from each other.

In the present century Francis William Newman was the first writer in England to give to the term "Theism" a definite and formal signification. He published an elaborate treatise in rhythmic prose under the title of *Theism, Doctrinal and Practical*, in 1858. Soon after, in 1863 or 1864, Miss Frances P. Cobbe issued her *Broken Lights*, in which we find the term Theism freely applied to the religious beliefs of which I am speaking. But some years before either of those two works appeared, I think in 1834, Theodore Parker had published in America his celebrated *Discourse of Religion*, in which he very often uses the term "Theism" in the same way, but not with such uniform and definite regularity as did F. W. Newman. For "Theism" Parker sometimes used the terms "The Absolute Religion," "Spiritualism," and even "Christianity." On the whole, then, I think Professor Newman is entitled to be regarded as the originator of the name Theism

in its application to the principles and beliefs of the Theistic Church.

For my own part, I had no choice but to follow an example so worthy of reverence, and to adopt the title which was already recognized, stamped and current amongst educated persons. All the three writers I have mentioned, Parker, Newman, and Miss Cobbe, alike repudiated the authority and infallibility of all so-called supernatural revelation, all alike regarded the knowledge of God as attainable only through the native faculties of man—Reason, Conscience, Love, and Religion.

It was necessary that the new teaching should be antagonistic : on one side to Christian dogmas, and on the other to Atheism, Pantheism, and Positivism. .

Miss Cobbe is, perhaps, the most distinguished for her antagonism to the latter three forms of thought, and while she attacked also the Christian dogmas, she stopped short of criticizing Jesus. Parker in his *Discourse of Religion* dealt fairly but severely with the errors of Jesus, yet occasionally neutralized his criticism by recurring to the sentimental talk fashionable among Unitarians, and even wrote a glowing hymn addressed to Jesus himself.

Professor Newman stands pre-eminent among the three for his unsparing, unequivocal opposition to the prevailing sentiment and idolatry, and he sees to this day the dire necessity for such an uncompromising attitude. I need hardly say that, although I do not concur with him in every detail of his criticism, I am heart and soul with him in the integrity of his principles on this matter of antagonism to the supremacy of Christ.

Theism, in this age and under present conditions is, therefore, both positive and negative, constructive and destructive, practical and militant.

All the chief religions of the world are believed by their respective votaries to have been revealed authoritatively by God to men, and the tales of such revelation and the subject-matter revealed are contained in so-called sacred books or in some mysterious way entrusted to an individual or to a Church, which, on that ground, claims absolute submission of mind and will, as to a God or living representative of God. Theists, on the other hand, declare that none of these alleged revelations can be genuine, because they contain ideas and beliefs which are contrary to the reason, or the conscience, or the affections, or the religious instinct of man, or to all four together, or to any of them in combination. The Theist will say, to one and all : " You appeal to my reason by every intelligible proposition you utter ; if it concerns a matter of ethics you appeal to my conscience ; if a matter of beneficence or the contrary, you appeal to my native human love ; and if on a matter

of the Divine dealings, you appeal also to my native religious instinct. Your revelation must appeal thus to my native faculties, or else it might as well be brought to me in a foreign language which I do not understand. I am absolutely bound by the necessity of things to use these faculties before I can understand even what you say. But some of you, Christians most of all, do your utmost to hamper and paralyze my faculties by bribes and threats, so that my power of perception is blurred, my judgment is biassed, and my discernment of truth from falsehood considerably weakened. You tell me that your revelation is the actual word of the God who made me and has a right to my prompt belief and obedience. You tell me that if I believe your message I shall have infinite and endless happiness, and that if I believe it not I shall be doomed to infinite and endless woe. Thus, while you apparently appeal to my God-given faculties for distinguishing truth from error, you really are appealing to my selfish hopes or to my debasing fears. This process of itself arouses my suspicions and sets me on my guard; makes me more sceptical than ever, and therefore I at once, if I can, bring all my energies to look carefully at what you declare to be God's truth and God's revelation to me. I bring to bear on this inquiry my native faculties. I ask in turn—Is this rational? Is it probable? Is it credible? Does it tally with experience and with the known order of natural events? I then use my conscience, and I ask: Is this or that statement consistent with right? Would it be just? Ought I to trust, love, or obey the Being to whom such and such conduct is imputed? I go farther, and ask my heart: Should I treat my own children in this way? Would I demean myself to torment any fellow-man or do any wanton harm even to my enemy? Could I be so brutal to a dog or to a venomous reptile?"

The Theist is essentially involved in such inquiries whenever any alleged Divine revelation is put before him claiming his belief and submission. He tests every statement by an appeal to what is highest and best within himself. He cannot, of course, pretend to solve every problem and to explain every detail of the marvellous cosmos, but it is always within his range and within his rights to submit all alleged revelations to the scrutiny of his reason, conscience, and noblest affections. And the answer hitherto given by the Theist, *e.g.*, to the Christian revelation by the Bible, by the Church, or by Christ is this: I find some of your statements to be childish, irrational, and palpably untrue. I find other of your statements to be morally objectionable—ascribing to God dealings which our conscience condemns. Nothing can dislodge the Theist from his position or shake his conviction of the wisdom, righteousness, and good will of God, because that conviction is based on the

facts of human nature, the nobler part of which consists, in its own small degree, of wisdom, righteousness, and goodwill or love. If there be a God at all, it is only commonsense to say, He must be at least as good as the best of men. Logically, you *can* overthrow the Theist by denying God and proving that there is no God at all. But so long as this is unproved, so long as ever it is doubtful whether there be a God or not, Theism stands absolutely secure.

That form of mere Agnosticism which says there may be a God, but we can never know anything about Him, is quite untenable while man retains his present faculties of reason, conscience, and affection. For to admit that there is a God, and yet He may be neither intelligent, nor righteous, nor loving is to deny that there is a God, but to admit that there may be a devil or an idiot at the source of things. Such foolishness is too transparent.

Here, however, it is needful, even if it be somewhat out of the order of my argument, to say distinctly that the claim we Theists make, to know by the world and by ourselves some little of the truth about God, is combined with a most profound and reverent kind of Agnosticism which confesses that at best we can only know a very little, and that but partially and defectively as compared with the actual and full truth. It is in our power to say, He must be as good as the best of His creatures. It is not in our power to say how infinitely better and higher He is. And this power of limited affirmation, enables us to discern whatever of truth and moral beauty may be found in all so-called revelations, and to accept heartily every word which may commend itself to our reason, conscience, and heart. This is why Theists have retained in their worship some of the old forms of the Christian Church, and use to great advantage many parts of the Bible, especially of the Psalms, and the Prophets, and the moral precepts of the New Testament. But you already know that we do not accept them on the score of any alleged supernatural authority; only on the ground of their intrinsic truth and value. We do the same with the Sacred Books of other religions likewise.

We never cease to proclaim that every man carries within him his own revelation, his own powers of seeing and knowing some truth about God, and that it is not only our right, but our paramount duty, to exercise our faculties in that search. Now, let me simply state what we Theists believe concerning God, as taught us by those three faculties of Reason, Conscience, and Affection. In the first place, Reason warns us that a knowledge of God as He is, and of the mode of His revelation to the material world, is impossible. We do not even yet know what our own souls are,

or how they are related to our bodies. But as we can clearly discern the distinction between soul and body, we reasonably infer that there is an infinitely greater Soul than ours behind all the phenomena of the visible universe. Chance being no longer tolerated as an explanation of what we see, the only alternative is that which Science herself affirms, namely, that order, and law, and purpose, mark every step in the course of what we call Nature. And if anywhere, even in a single instance, a true purpose can be seen, it is a proof of the existence of some power corresponding to what we call "mind" in ourselves.

Every discovery which we can make of law or purpose involves the conception of a mind capable of originating and working it out. It is no answer to say that mind as we know it in ourselves is always found in conjunction with a living and healthy brain, and that therefore there is no such thing as a Divine mind. For what is proved is not a mere postulate, but an accomplished fact. Here, before our eyes is the result of mind or reason in the most stupendous form. The fact teaches us something we could not otherwise know; viz. that mind is not necessarily dependent on a human brain; but does exist and work on a scale infinitely beyond our highest brain-power, and therefore is of necessity not dependent on brain as ours may be. Having got this proof of the Divine intelligence, our reason tells us that God must be *true*; that truth only can emanate from Him, and that only truth can, so to speak, please or satisfy His mind. Thus we get the idea of His trustworthiness out of our reason alone. But reason by itself is not sufficient; for men equally wise and equally intent on searching for truth, have arrived at opposite conclusions respecting the power or powers that rule in Nature. Some have insisted that there can only be one such power; others that there are many or at least two—one evil and one good. Science has helped us in this region of inquiry very much indeed by discovering innumerable tokens of the absolute unity of the whole cosmos, and by teaching that if there be a God at all, there can be only one.

Polarity there may be, but no antagonism. Science sides rather with the text, "I the Lord create good, and I create evil," and not with the Persian belief in the eternal war between Ormuzd and Ahriman.

Reason by itself will not solve the great problems of good and evil, life and growth, decay and destruction, which are everywhere manifest. So we turn to another faculty of our nature in order to know more of Him whom we call God. We have within us the moral sense, the sense of duty, the absolutely pure feeling: "I ought to do this, I ought not to do the other, no matter what the consequences to myself may be. I ought to do what I think

to be right. I ought to try with the utmost pains to find out what is right." This sense, for brevity, we call Conscience. It is often loosely confounded with moral codes, and put in place of the list of things we ought to do and ought not to do. These things the conscience does not tell us, they are taught by reason and experience and artificial education. The conscience is only the uniform voice telling us to do what we think or know to be right—because it is right, and not because we shall be rewarded—and to avoid doing what we think or know to be wrong, because it is wrong, and not because we shall be punished.

This sense of right is always associated in a religious mind with the idea of God. When we say "I ought" we really say "I owe it to my Maker to do this," or "I owe it to my fellow-man to do this, because duty is part of my obligation to the God who gave me life and powers, and put me into relation with other men."

Now, of course, it stands to reason, it is nothing more than plain common sense, to infer that the conscience could only have been implanted in man by a Being who was Himself good, and on the side of right and against wrong; and who wanted to provide that men should act from a sense of duty to one another, and also from the best motives. For I should have noted before, that the conscience demands not only right action, but pure motives, and demands from us secret goodness as well as good behaviour.

A God who caused us to feel all this must be Himself righteous, utterly true and faithful and trustworthy, pure in His purposes, and steadfast in their fulfilment. We thus simply and reasonably reach the conception of a Good God.

I am not here to-day to answer every objection that could be brought against Theism, only to state what it is. Nevertheless it will occur to a hundred doubters to point at once to what goes on in the world of pain and moral evil, and ask how one can reconcile these things with a belief in a good God. You will own with me that the question is too vast to be entirely answered now; but I affirm that we Theists have given a better answer to it than any which has been made by the other great religions of the world.

If that answer can be summarized at all I will try to give it now:—

Pain and death are not evils in themselves. They are essential to the progress and happiness of all sentient creatures. Take away the possibility of pain, and there could be no more physical enjoyment.

Pain likewise ministers constantly to the well-being and improvement of the outward lot of men and still more to the elevation

and progress of his nobler faculties. Without pain, some of our highest virtues would be unknown and impossible. As for death, if there were no such thing as dying, the world would become indeed a hell. When it is also believed that death, for man at least, is only the passage into a higher state of life, death is no longer considered as an evil at all. Moral evil is also a blessing in disguise; for it is produced *not* by any acts which we now call wicked, but by having a conscience which makes us see that when we do such and such acts they are wicked and wrong. Moral evil is the result not of a fall from perfection, but of a rise from sheer animalism and brutal unconsciousness of right and wrong. Moral evil is also the chief factor of our highest virtues in dealing with it.

I grant you, if death makes an end of us, this moral discipline is frustrated; but if we are to live for ever, our moral discipline here will have its fruition hereafter, and all souls will come to be righteous and fulfil the evident purpose for which they were created.

I fear,—nay, I know—how fragmentary and perhaps useless this answer may be. All I can say is, that we have devoted more attention to these subjects of pain and sin because they are the chief obstacles to a belief in a good God, and we have been rewarded for patient research by seeing in these very so-called evils the greatest tokens of His faithful goodness. The Atheist can only howl at them as the cursed conditions of a godless world. The Christian makes of creation a blunder, infinite and inexcusable, and a God defeated by a devil, while He stands by hopelessly helpless and sees the millions of lost souls streaming into endless hell. The Theist sees all things in the light of steps upward into light and glory and goodness and blessedness, marks of Divine wisdom and Divine power, Divine patience and Divine love. Anyway, the conscience tells us that God must be good, and will make all things come right at last, even if there is much that we cannot explain. If everything we call evil is not to issue in good, then man is more righteous than His Maker.

The conscience in man demands as well as expects that the course and destiny of the world should, before all things, be right.

But Reason and Conscience do not stand alone in our nature. They teach us much, yet there is more to learn; and a still higher teacher is within us. This is Love; which, thank God, everyone knows something of by experience. In spite of all the inferior and even foul meanings which have been given to the term, it is known as the impulse to do good, and only good, and the highest good, to its object. It is an emotion distinct from the Reason and

Conscience, yet whenever it is true Love it acts in harmony with both.

Its presence in the heart is a source of joy, its exercise is an ecstasy, our highest bliss on earth, and the success of its endeavours the richest reward. It is absolutely unselfish, every self-denial for love is so much gain; every sacrifice, even to life itself, is an indulgence of supreme desire. True love is the only perfect and infallible faculty which belongs to us, and nothing raises and ennobles us so much, or wins for us the homage of mankind. We know how it surpasses the achievements of the grandest genius, the most perfect skill, the greatest efforts of intellect. We know too, how true love excels even the rarest conscientiousness, and how far nobler it is to be impelled by love than by a cold sense of duty.

We need not to be told that if true love ruled all our actions, and was the motive of all our lives, all sin would disappear, and a multitude of sorrows would be heard of no more. We see, day by day, how love is destroying, one by one, the enemies of human happiness, and how it takes away the sting of those troubles which we have not yet learned to extirpate. Love is evidently bestowed upon us in order to arm us against the foes of pain and sin, which we have to fight. Love is the mighty conqueror of the world's evil. God has put love into our hearts in order that we may do our duty to each other, that everyone shall have, not only his rights, but a wealth of happiness into the bargain; that envy, and jealousy, and strife, shall cease; that we may live for each other and not for ourselves. He has given us love in order that the fulfilment of our natural duties may be a delight to us; that we may choose it freely, and not be driven to it like slaves; that in the most pure and unselfish devotion to others we may find our highest happiness. We all know more or less of this love which we may well call Divine, because it is so supreme over all else that is human. And shall we be so blind, so silly, as to suppose that our Maker is lacking in this—the noblest quality of our nature? While we attribute to Him intelligence by proof of our reason, and righteousness by the testimony of our conscience, shall we doubt that He has love which even we poor worms of the earth feel and enjoy? If God have no love, then indeed is He sunk below the level of man; and the vastness of His cosmos, and the order and beauty of it all count for nothing beside the love which flows from the human heart. The idea is too absurd to dwell upon. If there be a God, He must be infinitely more loving to us than a mother to her babe, and will always seek our good and only good, and our highest good; and to Him the exercise of His Fatherly love must ever be the unspeakable joy in which He lives and reigns.



Thus is the Theist taught by what is best in himself to think more grandly and nobly of God, than has been hitherto taught by any other religion in the world save one. That one is the Theism which we find embedded in some of the writings of the Hebrew Psalmists and Prophets, who, protesting against the Levitical and popular creeds of their day, as we protest against the Christian and popular creeds of our own, discovered for themselves these simple and sublime truths about God by the exercise of their own native faculties. And if we go through the world we shall find the same beautiful truths everywhere revealed to men, nominally of all creeds, who have surrendered themselves to the guidance of Reason, Conscience, and Love within them. Theism, then, is a belief in a wise, righteous, and loving Father, in whose wisdom, righteousness, and everlasting love we can entirely trust with an absolute certainty, that all the past, present, and future are working out issues that shall be only good—good for all, and good for each; good for every soul which He has begotten; so that there will come a time when every creature endowed with consciousness, memory, and aspiration, shall be satisfied and give Him thanks for all that they have been, and for all that they are. This is a belief against which no human heart can recoil. Every man would wish it to be true; only the whisper of doubt and fear mutters, "It is too good to be true." The Theist says, "Nothing is too good to be true." Man, at his best, cannot rise so high as the height to which God's greater love will carry him.

And now I ask you to turn and look at the natural and reasonable consequences of such a belief. First, it draws our hearts towards God in trust and love. We are made patient by it, and willing to hear what happens, because it is of God's sending. If it be conquerable we do our utmost to get rid of it, seeing it is God's will that we should resist it. All trouble is given to us to fight with and to reduce to its lowest power of injury. Only when we see the trouble to be incurable and inevitable, then we must bear it patiently and manfully. But whatever it be, we see that it is sent in love, and is designed to do us good, and is sure to do us good and be the best for us in the end. Thus we conquer all the troubles and ills of life through trusting in a righteous and loving God. More important still is the fact that knowing God to be to us all a loving Father, our hearts are drawn towards Him in filial affection and earnest desire to do only what He wishes us to do, and forsake all that we feel to be wrong. This trust in and love of God therefore ensures our faithful duty to each other, and we try to cultivate both conscientiousness and brotherly love. By our love to God we are stirred up to

desire intensely purity of heart and motives, to be true and good where no eye can see, no human voice applaud, no human judgment can condemn. The man who prays to God to give him a clean heart and a right spirit is far more likely to serve well as a man and a brother than he who has no such desires at all.

Again, the love of God as a Father teaches that we are *all* brethren, and that all alike are His dear children, those we call the bad as well as those we call the good, and therefore we must be, like Him, loving unto all and turn our backs on none. All will have to be cured of their evil at last. And so this teaches the true nature of the Divine punishments. No sin is ever passed over with impunity, but strictly meets with its due penalty—never for vengeance, but always for correction and cleansing. The true Theist is the last man to say or to feel that because all men are safe in God's hands, therefore we may do as we like and sin with impunity. We say God's punishment is never to be evaded, as it is said to be, by atonement and the Christian scheme of salvation. We make our own roads of bliss or woe longer or shorter, more painful or more blissful, by every thought, word, or deed. But Theism gives what God has given a right to all to have and to enjoy—undying hope of being cleansed and made righteous and loving at the last. Some day in God's good time His work will be perfected in us.

It is fitting that I should bring these remarks to a close by stating the grounds on which the Theist believes in immortality. We pass by all the commonplaces of ground for the hope to which so many cling, such as the universal aspiration for life after death and the tender affections which are so grievously wounded by the separation from those we love. We pass by also the ridiculous nonsense about "the resurrection of the body through the Lord Jesus Christ." Our sole ground of hope that we cannot die is in the Fatherly love of God towards us all. If He loves us He will never consent to part with us. If He will part with us, if He wants us no more, He cannot love us, and there is an end of our love and trust. I might reverently say an end to Him, too, for man's heart can only love a loving God. This is enough on which to base the hope of immortality—simply the love of God towards us, as great as, nay, infinitely greater than, our love to each other. It is a hope only because we have not been behind the veil of mortal death. But it is a hope amounting to a certainty, for it is a definite corollary from our belief in God Himself. It is also a hope without any anxiety or necessity to know any of the conditions of that future life. We trust God's love so entirely and with such perfect peace that we do not want to know beforehand anything which He is not willing to tell us. Whatever it

be, it will be the best for us ; and what His wisdom and love devise is sure to satisfy us. But we *must have it*. We must live again, unless there be no God to love and to live for, in which case, speaking for myself, I would rather not try so dangerous an experiment. I would prefer to be extinguished.

I hope I have not taxed your patience too severely. My object will have been attained if you go away with a clear idea that Theists believe in one (absolutely undefined, non-material) Being who, in our poor language, is the Author of our lives and the Father of our souls—so wise, so capable, so righteous, and so loving that all the sons of men may put their trust in Him without one spark of doubt or fear ; that He is known to us as this trustworthy loving God by the highest faculties of our own nature, which, as Father, He has transmitted to us in order that we might know sufficient of what He is, and so come to love Him, and willingly out of love fulfil our duties to each other, and love them with a pure heart fervently.

This belief—a practical religion and not a mere intellectual conception—will alone enable us to explain the great problems of life and help us to bear its troubles, while it ennobles all our pleasures and heightens all our joys, gives patience and fortitude in life, and sweet peace and brightest hope in the hour of death. It is a Gospel worthy of the song of angels and archangels:—

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward man.”

## SPINOZA.

BY SIR FREDERICK POLLOCK

SOME twelve years ago I was concerned in a movement for obtaining adherents in this country towards the erection of a monument to Benedict Spinoza at the Hague, where he spent the latter years of his life; and I received a good many interesting letters on that occasion from various persons. One of the shortest, and also one of the most interesting, was from a great man of letters whom this country has lately lost, Matthew Arnold. "After all," he said, "it seems rather absurd to treat Benedict Spinoza as an eminent Dutchman; the right thing to do would be to build him a statue and altar at the top of Pisgah, and to sacrifice on it seven bullocks like Louis Veuillot and seven rams like ——." I must not say to whom the seven rams were likened, for the name was that of, a dignitary of the Church of England still living.

There is another modern testimony I should like to cite, as showing that Spinoza was by no means merely an eminent systematic philosopher. It is the testimony of Flaubert, one of the greatest of recent French writers. Flaubert, writing in 1872 to Georges Sand, tells her what he had been doing lately, and he says, amongst other things:—

"I shall get back to work on my St. Anthony in a week's time, when I have done with Kant and Hegel, two great men who make me feel stupid. When I take leave of them I fall to, like one famished, on my old Spinoza, who is worth them all. What genius! What a piece of work is his *Ethics*!"

This is useful for two purposes: to show that Flaubert was not merely a frivolous French novelist; and that in modern France the best people do not find Spinoza by any means obsolete.

It would be altogether out of place to enter here at length on the facts of Spinoza's life, but it may be well to remind you very shortly of what was his origin, and where and how he lived. Spinoza belonged to a family of Spanish<sup>1</sup> Jews, one of the many

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Martineau's *Study of Spinoza*, chap. i.

families driven into exile by the revival of persecution against the Jews which took place in the Spanish Peninsula towards the end of the sixteenth century. It is matter of general history how the Spaniards, having attained a very great place in the world, set themselves systematically to lose it by driving out of the country nearly all the best elements within it. Not content with having reconquered the part of Spain which had been occupied by the Arabs, they expelled first the Arabs and then the Jews, and having reduced Spain to an admirable standard of orthodoxy, they proceeded to make Spain what she is now, a third-rate power, with no literature to speak of, and with absolutely no influence on European thought. So Spain ultimately had her reward. The immediate effect was that a considerable number of Spanish and Portuguese Jews migrated to the Netherlands—at that time the only country in Europe where free thought could be said really to exist, or where a colony of Jews could hope to settle with tolerable freedom from disturbance. Even there it was an experiment. However, the experiment succeeded. The Israelite colony soon attracted more settlers when it was found that they were sure of an asylum. They became prosperous, and you may see amongst the Rembrandts in the National Gallery his admirable portraits of some of the great Jewish merchants of his own time. In one of these Jewish families of Amsterdam Spinoza was born in the winter of 1632. At a very early age he became learned in the law of his people, and in the theology of the Rabbis, and showed symptoms of beginning to think for himself. The stories that are told of this part of his life are very fragmentary, and not altogether consistent, and we are left a great deal to conjecture as to what really took place. Something he certainly did, perhaps in the way of trying to form a circle of young men like-minded with himself, which caused the authorities of the synagogue to treat him as a dangerous person. It was not merely a matter of speculative orthodoxy; the Jewish synagogue existed wholly on sufferance in Amsterdam. The leaders of the synagogue evidently thought that they were tolerated only on condition of being as orthodox as it was possible for Jews to be, and that if any sort of heterodoxy were suffered amongst them they might lose the sufferance on which they had so far counted. As men of business, they may well have thought rightly enough. The result was that Spinoza received strong hints to keep his opinions to himself. It seems he even received offers of substantial reward on those terms. But he was found inflexible, and at length was solemnly excommunicated. This was in 1650, when he was not quite twenty-four years of age.

He took the excommunication as a natural and inevitable

consequence of his resolution, and having been in this way shut out from obtaining, as he easily might have done, a position of prosperity and honour among his own people, he betook himself to making a living by grinding glasses for optical instruments. His work, it appears, was of special excellence. In the year 1670 he removed to the Hague, where he completed his principal works; his greatest work, the *Ethics*, was in hand, as we know from his letters, during the greater part of his active life, but was printed only after his death.

In 1663 he had a tempting offer of the Chair of Philosophy at Heidelberg, and the conditions were such as appeared to give him great liberty to say whatever he pleased, but there was a saving clause to the effect of not teaching anything contrary to the established religion, and Spinoza, although he was a poor man, preferred philosophizing in his own way to holding a chair of philosophy even under the most honourable conditions with any such obligation attached to it. Therefore he declined the Elector's offer in a very courteous letter, but with unmistakable decision.

He was not only a poor man, but a weakly man; he was of consumptive habit, and died at the age, which may be called early for a philosopher, of forty-four, in the year 1677. The event excited very little notice at the time, but his posthumous works, published shortly afterwards, raised a storm of controversy which gave the first indication of his coming renown.

Spinoza had, to some extent, special relations with this country through his friend Oldenburg, a learned German who migrated to England, and was the first Secretary to the Royal Society. Many of Spinoza's most interesting letters were written to Oldenburg, and the originals of some of them are preserved in the Royal Society's library. But there is no evidence that English philosophers had any notion of Spinoza's importance either in his lifetime or for a considerable time afterwards.

I have mentioned that Spinoza was cast out of the synagogue with all solemn forms, and it is well known that he never joined any other religious body. He was outside all forms of religious bodies existing in the Netherlands, and although he made no attempt to dissuade anyone from a belief which satisfied him, he certainly had no attachment of his own to any recognized creed. It seems, therefore, a curious thing that a perfectly solitary and independent philosopher, living as Spinoza did, should count among the people who have had a decided influence on the religion of modern Europe; yet such is the fact, and it is a fact that sets one thinking in many ways. Such a thing could not have happened in the case of any Asiatic religion. For example, one cannot imagine a Mahometan, or a Buddhist, being seriously influenced by a holy

man who did not belong to his own religion, or to any other religion in particular, and who wholly declined to be bound by Mahometan or Buddhist formulas. Still less can we imagine Spinoza's own people admitting anything of the kind to be possible among them. I think it is only in Christendom—and in Western Christendom—that such a thing could be even fairly probable.

Let us consider for a moment what this means. It means that Christianity, at all events Western Christianity, differs from the other great religions in the world in having a certain expansive and elastic quality. By this quality it is constantly taking up new elements into itself, and if not transforming, yet seriously modifying in effect, its earlier dogmas and the practical conclusions drawn from them. How Christianity comes to have this expansive quality, which I think it clearly has, is a very curious historical question. A still more curious question, perhaps, is how Christianity did become the religion of imperial Rome at all; how it made its great leap in the hands of St. Paul from the Eastern to the Western world. When Christianity had once begun to take up the elements of Greek thought, then it becomes less surprising that the expansive and elastic quality of the old Greek philosophy should have continued to manifest itself under the new form. When we think of the history of the early Church, we are sometimes apt to forget how many things it saved. It may not have saved them in the exact fashion in which we should have liked to have them, but in what we call the dark ages the question was whether the remembrance of Greek and Roman civilization should be saved at all. Some thinkers have held that Christianity was an agent in destroying the Roman Empire, but it seems to me to have been rather the other way. The Roman empire was effete, and was already in a course of breaking up; and the Church of Rome, being the strongest thing that was left in the world, took to itself such fragments of the ancient Roman civilization and of the ancient Greek thought as it could assimilate consistently with its own fundamental ideas. It is, perhaps, too little to say *fragments* of Roman civilization, for the order and discipline of the Roman Church have preserved to this day a great deal of the old order of the Roman Empire. Hobbes's epigram on the papacy, itself imperial among epigrams, contains much of the truth of the matter. It is "the ghost of the Roman Empire, sitting crowned on the grave thereof."

We also have to remember that Rome had taken up (more or less imperfectly, but still it had taken up) the enlightening influences of Greek thought. And the expansiveness of modern Western Christianity is perhaps due to the Greek spirit which

was first absorbed by Roman civilization and institutions, and then taken up into the framework of the Church, amid the general ruin wrought by the barbarian conquests. This process, I need hardly say, has gone much farther than most official expounders of Christian doctrine are at liberty to admit. As my friend and master, Sir Henry Maine, once said: "Except the blind forces of Nature, nothing moves in this world that is not Greek in its origin," and to this Greek origin, I think, we may fairly refer the vitality of Western Christianity, which has prevented it from standing still, and has enabled it to take up such new influences as that of Spinoza.

We have to consider then in what way Spinoza can be said to have influenced modern religious ideas. In the first place we have the example of his life, which was almost a singular one among modern philosophers. Secondly, we have the actual contribution made by Spinoza to the dogmatic and historical criticism of the documents on which the Christian religion is externally based. Lastly (and this is, after all, much the most important), we have the general spirit and temper of Spinoza's philosophy as to the relations of man to the universe he lives in.

In the first place, as to Spinoza's life, it was one of the most blameless lives ever led by a philosopher. That alone does not prove his philosophy to be true; we can hardly say that it even tends to prove its truth. It tends only to prove the sincerity with which the man's beliefs, whether more or less right in themselves, were formed and held. But the practical effect of such a character as Spinoza's is very great. It has secured a fair hearing for his philosophy in quarters where otherwise there would have been, and indeed there was, much prejudice against it. Spinoza's philosophy, and the form in which he put it, were altogether distasteful to everything orthodox. Even when Spinoza meant to be conciliatory, there was something about his uncompromising way of stating his results which gave peculiar offence to orthodox theologians of all sects and denominations. But Spinoza's life was such that even his enemies could find nothing to say against it; for we need not count a few idle tales which were in circulation only for a short time, and are now deservedly forgotten except by minute investigators of Spinoza's biography.

The principal authority for Spinoza's life is a little book written by a Lutheran minister at the Hague,—a good man, who from his soul detested Spinoza's doctrines, but who also was a kindly and veracious sort of man, and who took some trouble to ascertain the facts as they really were. He evidently took great interest in Spinoza's character, notwithstanding the wicked and abominable nature of his writings, and was at some pains to refute the calumnies



which were being spread about Spinoza some few years after his death. Now he tells us about Spinoza's life that it was of the most quiet and peaceable kind. He was of a very even temper; nobody ever saw him either very sad or very merry. (One could hardly expect high animal spirits of a man in Spinoza's state of health.) He was always courteous and civil, considerate to the people of the house, especially when any of them were ill. He used to talk to the children of the house, and told them to mind what their elders said, and not to forget to go to church. When they came back from the congregation he would ask them what they had heard from the preacher. "In particular," says this good minister, Colerus, "my predecessor, Dr. C. —, of blessed memory, being a really learned man, was much honoured by Spinoza." Indeed, he sometimes went to hear him himself, praised his learned exposition of Scripture, and the appropriate applications; and he advised the landlord and his fellow-lodgers by no means to miss his sermons. Once he was asked by the landlady whether, in his opinion, "she might be saved by her religion." It was a curious thing for a good Protestant to ask an excommunicated Jew, but it shows the sort of personal impression that Spinoza had made on those he lived with. He answered her thus: "Your religion is very well; you have no need to seek another for your salvation so long as you hold yourself to a peaceable and pious life." Spinoza was much too sensible a man to interfere with simple folk who were not capable of understanding his philosophy, and who were content in their own way of life; I do not think he had much sympathy with the sort of people who not only must have formulas, but must be always tinkering them. In short the good Lutheran minister's biography is a constant panegyric of Spinoza's character, intermixed with violent denunciations of his writings, and praises of the many worthy persons who refuted them. Those worthy persons are not much read at this day. I have tried to read some of them, but I cannot say I have thoroughly succeeded.

So much as to Spinoza's life. In recent times I think no one of any account has spoken of Spinoza's personal character save with respect and even reverence. I may instance amongst others Heine, the greatest Hebrew since Spinoza, one of the greatest of modern writers, and also one of the least reverent. But Heine, when he came to speak of Spinoza, said his life was only to be compared to that of his great predecessor, Jesus Christ.

Now we come to Spinoza's contributions to the criticism of Scripture. The work in which these are contained is the *Theologico-Political Treatise*. I will give you the title of it from an old English translation which was published as early as 1689. It is

called "A Treatise partly theological and partly political, containing some few discourses to prove that the Liberty of Philosophizing (that is, making use of Natural Reason) may be allowed without any prejudice to piety, or to the peace of any Commonwealth, and that the loss of public peace and religion itself must necessarily follow where such a liberty of reasoning is taken away." It was already much to publish such a title-page in the year 1670, in a community that professed to hold the orthodox principles of Calvinism. Further, this *Theologico-Political Treatise* has two striking characters. It was the first, or almost the first, comprehensive plea for toleration published in modern Europe. In that respect, no doubt, it only took up the work of those whom we call Humanists,—the great scholars of the sixteenth century, who spread abroad the study of Greek, and the intelligent study of antiquity in general, and whose work was sadly interrupted by the Reformation. We may all think what we please about the Reformation, but for my own part I am apt to think that the way in which it happened was a misfortune for European civilization. At all events the century succeeding the Reformation was occupied with religious wars and controversies, and the genial learning of a Humanist like Erasmus could hardly find place for a time. To a certain extent Spinoza may be said, in the *Theologico-Political Treatise*, to take up the burden of Erasmus and his fellows. In the second place, this book was the great forerunner of modern biblical criticism. For the first time the learned world had forced upon it a work by a writer who professed to take Scripture as its own witness, and from the witness of Scripture alone showed that, if construed rationally, it would not bear the sense required by the ordinary advocates of the Church. Spinoza sets out to argue with the orthodox upholders of Scripture on their own premises. He does not criticize the Scriptures from external history or philosophy. He says, in effect: "I will not argue with you on philosophical grounds; I take the Scriptures, and show from the Scriptures themselves that your way of interpreting them is absurd, and that your conclusion about the duty of believing the letter of the Scripture are absolutely inconsistent with Scripture itself." But in the course of doing that, Spinoza was led to the most remarkable anticipations of a great deal of what we now call modern criticism. For example, Spinoza points out (as indeed certain learned Jews had earlier pointed out, but with designed obscurity), that we cannot imagine Moses sitting down to write the account of his own death which is contained in the so-called Books of Moses; and, in like manner, that a man who wrote "the Canaanite was then in the land," must have been writing at a time long after the Jews had occupied Canaan. This, and other

such matters, are now regarded as the elements of intelligent criticism of the Scripture narrative, but two hundred years ago they were exceedingly bold things for anybody to print and publish. Probably it was for such opinions as these that Spinoza was put out of the synagogue. As regards the influence of the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* in this country in particular, it was translated as early as 1689. Some years earlier the chapter about miracles was taken out of the book and printed by itself, but without any acknowledgment of its authorship, and in a sort of fragmentary way. And at various times in the eighteenth century Freethinkers and Deists drew a great deal on the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* for arguments against the more orthodox divines.

To sum up the main points of this treatise: it gives us, for one thing, the rational treatment of what is called the inspiration of Scripture. As Spinoza points out in a sufficiently clear and uncompromising way, we must read the Bible as a book written by men, who were writing for men, and who not only were not free from prejudice and sources of error themselves, but adapted themselves to the prejudices of their readers. Then there is the chapter on miracles, which I have just mentioned, where Spinoza demolishes the vulgar idea of miracles as conclusively as Hume did after him, and I think in a larger spirit and with more permanent results. Spinoza points out that—

“the vulgar notion is that God’s power and providence do most plainly appear when they see anything strange and unusual happen in Nature, contrary to the customary notions they have of Nature, especially when that which happens is for their benefit and advantage. So that they conclude that those men deny the being and providence of God who endeavour to explain and understand what they call miracles by their natural causes. They, indeed, think that while Nature goes on in her wonted course God doth nothing, and on the contrary, when God acts, the power of Nature and natural causes are idle and at a stand; so that they imagine the power of God and the power of Nature to be two distinct and almost opposite things, neither do they think the power of God at any time so wonderful as when, according to their fancy, it conquers and subdues the power of Nature.”

He then proceeds to show, on the contrary, that nothing can really happen contrary to Nature, and to explain his own position, that we cannot know the existence, nor consequently the providence of God, by miracles, but they more manifestly appear in the constant and unchangeable order of Nature. He goes on to show

in detail how the passages of Scripture relied on for the current view of miracles are more intelligible when explained as examples of common Oriental rhetoric, or in other non-miraculous ways. In most of these cases Spinoza is perfectly right; in some few he draws inferences which modern scholarship would hardly recognize. You must remember that he sets out with admitting the authority of Scripture in some sense, so that he is sometimes driven to forced interpretations. I will quote the summing up of his position:—

“When the Scripture saith, that for the sins of men the earth is barren, or that blind men are recovered to sight by faith, it signifies no more than do those other sayings, that God is angry, or grieved with our sins, that He repents of the good He hath done, or intended, and that God by seeing a sign called to mind His promise: all which expressions are spoken poetically, or according to the opinion and prejudice of the writer. So that we absolutely conclude that all things which Scripture relates to have happened, did happen, as all things do, according to the laws of Nature; and if in Scripture there be anything recorded which by plain and evident demonstration can be proved to be repugnant to the laws of Nature, or impossible to follow from them, we ought to believe it was inserted by sacrilegious men, for whatever is against Nature is against Reason, and whatever is against Reason ought to be rejected as absurd.”

Spinoza holds, in short, that God's works are not something contrary to Nature, but are the order of Nature itself.

Another point considered in the *Theologico-Political Treatise* is the relation of the fundamental and practical portion of religion, as a guide for the conduct of life, to matters of speculative opinion. Here, again, Spinoza is very plain-spoken. He says that the root of the matter is not in correct opinions, but in obedience to the moral law. There are two chapters of this book, the 13th and 14th, in which Spinoza's position as to the relation of faith to philosophy is worked out. Spinoza's point is that faith, as he calls it—that is, the essentials of practical religion—is a very simple thing, and does not require any particular speculative opinions at all. He says that “it follows, even from the words of Scripture, that they are anti-Christians who persecute the opinions of just men who differ from them in opinion, and do not maintain their doctrines. They that love justice and charity are thereby only found to be believers, and whoever persecutes such believers is anti-Christ. Lastly, it follows that faith does not require opinions that are in themselves true, but such only as shall best incline a man's heart to obedience.” Spinoza does not mean that

it is absolutely indifferent to a man's salvation what he thinks, but only that it does not concern the civil power what his opinions are, so long as they are not opinions which manifestly lead to a dangerous or immoral life. And then he goes on to enumerate those doctrines of universal faith, as he calls them, which are the most that can be reasonably regarded as necessary in a well-ordered commonwealth; viz.:

"That there is a God, or Supreme Being, who is most just and merciful, by whose example every man ought to regulate his life; secondly, that this God is One, which opinion is absolutely necessary to make a man adore, admire, and love God—for devotion, admiration, and love, are caused by that excellency which is in one above all others; thirdly, that He is everywhere present, or that all things are known to Him, for if anything were hidden from Him, or if men did not think that He seeth all things, we might doubt of His equity and justice, whereby He governeth all things; fourthly, that He hath supreme power and dominion over all things, that He doth nothing by compulsion, but of His own good will and pleasure; fifthly, that the worship of God, and obedience to Him, consists only in justice and charity towards our neighbours; sixthly, that only they who obey God by such a course of life will be saved; and others, who are slaves to their lusts and pleasures, will be condemned; lastly, that God pardoneth the sins of those that repent, because there is no man living without sin; therefore, if this were not an article of faith, all would despair of salvation."

You must not suppose that these positions are statements of Spinoza's own philosophy, at any rate in his own way; they are such as indeed Spinoza might adopt, but after an explanation of the terms which would bring out a result very different from any form of popular religion. Spinoza is considering the precepts of religion from the practical point of view of the statesman, as guarantees of civil order. In the last chapter of treatise he points out, rising almost to eloquence, although writing in an artificial language, that the liberty of honest opinion is not a danger to the commonwealth, but is rather a safeguard. One passage which is often quoted evidently had reference to the religious wars which had lately been going on:—

"Can anything be more pernicious than to treat persons of a free, ingenuous disposition as enemies, and for no crime or wickedness put them to death, making the scaffold, which frights none but villains, a public theatre, whereon such innocent persons give such examples of courage and patience, as turn to the shame and reproach of the supreme magistrate's majesty?"

Again :—

“Schisms proceed not from the study of truth, that fountain of meekness and moderation, but from an imperious humour of prescribing to others; and therefore they are rather to be accounted schismatics who damn other men’s writings, and stir up the waspish multitude against them, than those that write to learned men, and call nothing but reason to their aid; for they are truly disturbers of public peace who in a free commonwealth would take away the liberty of men’s judgment, which ought not to be suppressed.”

And he sums up by saying that a Commonwealth’s greatest safety is to place religion and piety in the practice of justice and charity, and to make things sacred as much subject to the Supreme Power as things civil, and to take cognizance of nothing but men’s actions suffering every man to think what he will, and speak what he thinks.

The treatise had no apparent practical effect at the time, but it was largely read. It appeared in various issues with false title-pages and other precautions against the printers being prosecuted, and within a short time it was also circulated in translations.

I have already mentioned that during the eighteenth century it was a sort of arsenal for freethinkers, although the value of the the principal part of Spinoza’s philosophy was certainly not recognized by those who thus used it.

But we must come to the real centre of Spinoza’s philosophy to find that which, after all, has given vitality to his work. A man does not live as a great philosopher merely by happy anticipations of modern historical criticism, nor even by showing a more enlightened view of the relation of Church and State than was common in his time. When Spinoza deals with philosophy for its own sake, he distinguishes the precepts which are needful for the outward conduct of life, from the inner wisdom by which a man attains happiness for himself. A man may be a very good citizen without being at all happy, or at peace in his own mind. Still more may he be a good citizen without being a philosopher, or even without having given any serious thought to the ultimate problems of the world. Now Spinoza points out emphatically that spiritual happiness does not consist in obeying any rules whatever, even the best of rules; not that rules are not good and necessary, but happiness will not come by obedience alone. In this he agrees, I think, with the great moralists of all persuasions.

He started as many philosophers have done, and as the founders of the great Asiatic religions have done, from the futility of the common objects of human ambition and desire. These may

be satisfied, but after they are satisfied, if a man gives himself time to think, he finds, as the Preacher did long ago, that all is vanity. Deliverance from vanity is the object of Spinoza's philosophy as much as it had been the object of the great religions of the world. Spinoza's way, however, is absolutely opposed to the Eastern way, which is still nominally supreme, I suppose, over a majority of the human beings who have attained the stage of thinking seriously at all. The Eastern way is to say that not only the common objects of desire, regarded as an end in themselves, are vanity, but that all finite life is vanity; the world is a bad thing; life is a bad thing; let us escape from it altogether and be delivered. Such is the avowed object of the great Asiatic religions, with the one exception of the religion of the Jews. The Jewish point of view, which is, of course, what Spinoza had to work upon, is on the contrary, that life is good; life is a gift of God and to be enjoyed, and it is to be made the most of. But the philosophy of orthodox Judaism, such as it was down to Spinoza's day, had very little foundation to build upon. The common belief that virtue was always rewarded in this world, and vice always punished, was evidently insufficient. Its insufficiency had been seen by the prophets and by the nameless poet of the Book of Job. A new base had to be found. I shall not attempt here to explain Spinoza's philosophy, having already made, in a published work, such contribution as I could to that very difficult undertaking. The central idea, however, is the union of man with the order of the world. In so far as a man can understand that he is part of the order of the world, and can consciously realize this with cheerful acquiescence, he has the wisdom which delivers him from vanity and earthly desires and the vicissitudes of life. This is a hard thing to accept at first sight, and Spinoza does not pretend that it is easy. "You tell me—" so one may abridge the gist of several of his remarks—"this way is hard, certainly it is so. If it were not hard everybody would attain to it; all things worth having are hard." Spinoza's view involves a great demolition of prejudice. It involves particularly the demolition of the great prejudice that the world and all that therein is was made for man and exists for his benefit; in short, of the whole doctrine of so-called Final Causes.

The Appendix to the first part of Spinoza's *Ethics* contains his opinion of the current doctrine. He says that men being accustomed to make various instruments for their own use, and finding that many parts of Nature which they did not make are useful to them, conclude that this must be so because these natural conveniences were made for the use of man by somebody else. From the example of the instruments they are accustomed to provide

for themselves, they conclude that there must be one or more rulers of Nature, having a free will like man's; who have provided all these things for them and made them for their use. Then they proceed to consider what the designs and temper of the gods are like, and they set about propitiating the gods, so that the gods may love them better than their neighbours. But then they find many things which are not convenient, but the reverse; earthquakes, pestilences, storms, and the like, and these they account for by supposing that the gods are angry for some wrong that men have done them; or for sins committed in the observance of their worship; and although experience showed them every day that good and ill happen to the just and the unjust alike, yet they did not cease from the ingrained prejudice; for it was easier to relegate this among the many other things they did not know, and so to keep their present and inborn condition of ignorance, than to destroy all that fantastic building they had made, and set about thinking out a new one. Wherefore they made sure that the judgments of the gods were altogether above the capacity of man. This, Spinoza says in a singularly caustic passage, would have been enough to prevent all true philosophy from ever being discovered, if it had not been for the mathematics which showed the way to a clear and intelligible manner of thinking.

I need not tell you that Spinoza does not clear up the world-old problem of the origin of evil. Still, he has his own way of looking at it. He says that people are accustomed to argue thus:—If everything is a consequence of the absolutely perfect nature of God, why are there so many imperfect things in Nature? But the perfection of things is to be measured only by their own nature and power, and things are not more or less perfect because they are agreeable or the reverse to the senses of mankind; or because they are helpful to our nature or repugnant to it. "As for those who ask why God did not make all men in such sort that they should be led solely by the command of reason, I have no other answer than that it was because matter was not wanting for Him to create everything from the greatest degree of perfection even to the least." That is not a pleasant answer to human pride, but I think it is a great deal nearer the truth than any of the popular ones, and not the less so because it is specially obnoxious to the ordinary assumption of orthodox theologians. Many theologians have deserved the respect, some have deserved the reverence and love, of all good men. But there is also a kind of professional theology which may be described as a pretended science of teaching God Almighty his own business. Accordingly Spinoza, having insisted that God Almighty knew his own business best, was denounced as a blasphemer of the most wicked and



insidious kind, and the *Ethics* called forth a storm of condemnation almost greater than had been excited before by the *Theologico-Political Treatise*.

Spinoza's method of arriving at the union of man with the order of things, or with God—for in Spinoza these expressions are either synonymous, or distinguished only by refined metaphysical differences—is by a purely intellectual process. In this he is like the old Greek philosophers. In fact parts of Spinoza's dialectic are very like the reasoning of the followers of Aristotle. I do not mean his earliest followers, but those who developed the doctrine in the Arabic schools.

This is another curious point of contact between Spinoza and the better part of Western Christianity. Spinoza's results are arrived at in a purely philosophic way, but they are essentially like the views which one finds in those Christian philosophers who are commonly called Mystics. There is an anonymous fourteenth-century book, which resembles Spinoza in so far as its author had no intention of founding a school, and did not even wish his work to pass by his name. He was more successful than Spinoza, for we do not really know at all who he was. His book is known as the *German Theology*, and I think it is about as certain as anything in the history of letters can be that Spinoza had never read or heard of it; and if he had read or heard of it, he probably would have paid no attention to it. But it is important to see how very far this fourteenth-century German, who, for anything one knows, may have been a monk, was removed from the vulgar machinery of practical theology. He says that a man who has attained a real sense of religion loves the good only for its own sake. These men, he says, are in a state of freedom, because they have lost the fear of pain or hell, and the hope of reward or heaven, and are living in pure submission to eternal goodness, in the perfect freedom of fervent love. This mind was in Christ in perfection, and is also in His followers—in some more, in some less. And again he says: "Mark: that when true love and true light are in a man, good is known and loved for itself, and as itself." And he says again: "In this sense the saying is true that God loveth not Himself; that if there were aught better than God, God would love it, and not Himself." And much more, which is well worth seeing at large in the book. These passages and several others might almost have come out of the last part of the *Ethics* of Spinoza. So far as I know there is absolutely no trace of historical connection, but it is important to see that a fourteenth-century Catholic, living in a time when the doctrines of the Church of Rome would not generally lend themselves to such views, could write down this, and apparently without any

consciousness that he was in any way offending against orthodoxy. I do not mean you to suppose that the author of this book would have been what we call a reformer, but I think he would probably have told you that what the Church commanded was no doubt right, but that all these ceremonies and details of dogma were as nothing compared to a man having the true light.

Spinoza's work fell, at the time, quite flat, not only on the orthodox, but on most of the unorthodox, until towards the end of the eighteenth century. It was a time when people cared very little for anything they could not put into definite propositions, and all through the eighteenth century you will find that the higher side of Spinoza's teaching was absolutely ignored. I think there is not a single writer in the eighteenth century who can be said to grapple with Spinoza seriously. His orthodox opponents picked logical holes in one or more of his propositions, which was not a very difficult feat, although I am bound to say that they did it ill rather than well. Freethinkers, on the other hand, got hold of the *Theologico-Political Treatise*, and picked out its arguments against miracles, and so forth, as controversial weapons; whereas it is really a little matter whether a man believes in miracles or not, but an infinitely greater matter in what spirit he believes or disbelieves them. The first man, so far as I know, in modern Europe who really took hold of Spinoza in the right way was Lessing, the great restorer of literature and criticism in Germany. Then the spirit of Spinoza, which was first awakened in Lessing, took hold of Goethe. To say that it took hold of Goethe is to say that it was established in the centre of the European movement of letters and civilization. I need hardly tell those of you whom it interests to know it that the spirit of Spinoza has been actively at work ever since in the whole development of modern German philosophy.

His influence then came to England through Coleridge, who was a man of genius in many directions: in poetry, in religion, and almost, although not quite, in philosophy. Coleridge learned to know Spinoza from the Germans, and taught much of what he knew to Wordsworth. There is an odd story in Coleridge's autobiography, of how he roamed about with Wordsworth on the Quantocks, where he was living during the early period of the great French war. There was an alarm about Jacobins and corresponding societies, and so a disguised police officer was sent to watch the movements of Coleridge and Wordsworth as being more or less suspected persons. Coleridge heard afterwards what this man had reported of the fragments of conversation he had picked up. "At first he fancied that we were aware of our danger, for he often heard me talk of 'Spy Nozy;' which he was inclined

to interpret of himself and of a remarkable feature belonging to him; but he was speedily convinced that it was the name of a man who had made a book and lived long ago." Coleridge was accordingly left unmolested. Perhaps it is not too fanciful to suppose that something of Coleridge's talk about Spinoza found its way into Wordsworth's poetry, and from thence into what, for want of a better word, we call Nature-Worship—an element which has certainly been an influence for the better in nearly all English literature since.

But there were also theologians and philosophers who learnt much from Coleridge in due time, and amongst others one whose name I can never mention otherwise than with reverence—and I think it would have been the same even if I had not had the privilege of knowing him—I mean the late Mr. Maurice, one of the most enlightened and large-hearted men the Church of England ever had. He wrote a book on Modern Philosophy, in which he gave many pages to Spinoza, and treated him as you would expect a man of his nature to do (although evidently dissenting from his conclusions), with the utmost respect and moral sympathy. I think Maurice must have taught a great many people to think better of Spinoza than the popular theology does; and what Maurice's influence was on liberal English theology I need not say here. So that I think one may say that Spinoza has been a living power not only in modern philosophy and theology, but in the best life of modern English theology. I am quite aware that there are still sections in the Church of England, and for anything I know in other Churches in England, which refuse to have anything to do with modern criticism, and regard men like Maurice and Kingsley as dangerous. From their own point of view those sections are doubtless right, and they have their reward.

I am not here (need I say it?) to endeavour to persuade you that everything Spinoza said is right; or that you may not find serious logical defects in his work. That is one of the great misapprehensions that have grown up about Spinoza; because he put some of his work into the form of demonstration in the manner of his time, it is supposed to be an absolutely logical system which must all stand or fall together. That is an entire mistake. And it would be a mistake even if Spinoza had thought that he had made an absolutely logical demonstration. The living power of a philosopher does not depend on his finding the whole truth, a thing which certainly no man has yet found. But Spinoza did that on a great scale which all of us on some scale, be it small or great, can certainly do. He sought truth with an open heart; he never feared to face it, however unexpected its appearance might be; and he never turned back from the consequences of

that of which he was once fully persuaded. He is, perhaps, the great example in modern Europe of one who worked as the true philosopher should work. He built (to borrow the words used by Mr. Browning for a different purpose in one of his noblest poems) "broad on the roots of things."

I have not thought it necessary so far to give out a text for this discourse, but I propose now to give you a text for the end. It is from William Blake, who, with the possible exception of Coleridge, is, in my judgment, the man of the greatest religious genius whom we have had in England in recent generations. I need hardly tell you that William Blake was also a madman, a dangerous heretic in both letters and art, and altogether unaccounted for by orthodox canons of poetry and painting. In other words, he was a great and original artist, endowed, moreover, with that peculiar kind of philosophical temper which we call religious insight as distinguished from pure intellectual speculation. Blake did not care much, I suppose, about the literal acceptance of his own words, and if any one construes them literally it is entirely on his own responsibility. But I think that in the words of Blake there is a good deal of the spirit of Spinoza, notwithstanding that Blake probably never heard of him :—

"The worship of God is honouring his gifts in other men, each according to his genius, and loving the greatest men best. Those who envy or calumniate great men hate God, for there is no other God."

## HUMANITY.

BY FREDERIC HARRISON.

A VERY large audience assembled at South Place to hear the lecture of the well-known leader of the Positivists, Mr. Frederic Harrison, on the subject of "Humanity as a Religious Centre." The lecturer stated that his position was different from that of the speakers who had preceded him, and also of those who were to follow him. All these rested on the Bible as, in some degree the word of God. He recognized only the revelation that is in the earth; Science was his revelation. His heaven was earth. How, then, could they claim a place amongst religionists at all? How can they be said to represent spiritual activities? That question he would try to answer. They *do* feel in sympathy with the aim of other churches, for "the object of all religions is alike." Men seek in religion the highest ideal of life, and this ideal, he believes, is to be found in the *world*. That which marks out the Positivist system from other religions is that it rejects every kind of doctrine which cannot be proved by scientific argument. Religion and science have hitherto stood in hopeless antagonism; Comte, however, said that the two were to be reconciled. In the light of this new centre of belief and duty, science found its creed in religion, and religion found its crown in science. They think that the future of religion will be hopeless unless it can find its *basis* in science. Turning to the other side of the picture, it will be seen how unsocial science must be unless it can do something in the way of moral elevation.

Objection has been made to their using the terms "religion," "soul," etc. It has been said to them, that the soul means an immaterial entity, and that "worship" means adoration of God. Positivism makes it clear that worship does not necessarily mean adoration of a supernatural Being. Religion properly means veneration for the power which exercises a dominant influence over our life. This power, by religionists, is called "God," but it need not mean God. The religion of China is a sort of nature-worship; in various parts of the world there has been sun-worship.

Buddhism was not a worship of God. All these different forms of religion were without a belief in God as a creator, but held belief in a *power*. Only the Jew, Christian, and Mohammedan have believed in a single creator. Such terms as "religion" and "soul" and "spiritual life" must not be cut down to meet the requirements of modern creeds. The objections referred to were merely verbal ones. He would consider (1) what Positivists mean by spiritual life, and (2) whether spiritual life has a prominent place in man's nature. Scientific creeds deal with man's spiritual life in an uncertain way. Atheists, on the other hand, go dead against the religious sentiment. Most people say nothing about spiritual life unless they belong to some religious sect. Many philosophers say that religion is no business of theirs, and what such think about God and the future is left in the dark. But surely these things must concern these philosophers and everyone else. It is impossible permanently to ignore this element. The question must be answered whether man needs any religion, and if so, how he is to find it. A philosophy which does not answer these questions will have no firm hold on human life.

What is the source of spiritual life? Their widest thoughts of *human* life bring them to this: they are in this world distinct from the environment of circumstances with which they are surrounded. What is our relation to this environment? Their deepest thoughts return to this: What is the relation of man to the world? Is the grave the end of man's work? Is life worth living? Is work worth doing? One day the world seems a cosmos; on another it seems a maze. Man's heart runs through all the scale of emotions—gratitude for nature's bounty; despair when it crushes some one dearer than life itself. This is the perennial source of spiritual life. The question is perpetually asked: What is the relation of the world to man, and man to the world? Human life depends on some power outside it. All possibility of morality depends on this: that a man feels the pressure of his surroundings. A man who leaves religion an open question is a source of danger to society. Positivism can join almost in the same words as other religions in regard to the folly and danger of stifling the religious instinct. To say that there can be no religion without God is as vain as to say there can be no belief unless based on the Apostles' Creed. The worship of God is but *one* phase of religion. The union of conviction with feeling in connection with that power which controls human life—that is religion. Comte said it was a metaphysical assumption that there was a supreme power over all things in the universe. Individuals have a power over many things. Mankind has a vast

power over individuals. One can feel gratitude to the sum of human kind in a way that is impossible to the outer world.

Humanity is more akin to us than the material world. The supreme power which man has searched for in the sky is beside him; it is heard in the whisper of husband and wife and child; it is in every true deed and feeling, and is heard in the still small voice within. Nevertheless it is not almighty, all wise, or all good. It does not control the world; humanity is dependent on the world, but it can adjust itself to the forces of nature. We know positively of no Supreme Being, i.e. Science gives no proof of such a thing as a Being Supreme in the whole moral and physical spheres. There may be such a Being. The sun may be such an intelligent Being; but we cannot determine it. Desist from the search for a Supreme Power, and recognize that there stand two great facts—(1) the world, and (2) man; the former imposing fixed and unalterable conditions on man; the latter submitting to this power, and exerting a glorious intelligence in controlling it—benevolent, beneficent, yet not all-wise, all-powerful, or all good. Humanity is a kind of father and mother to us all. This in short is the answer of Positivism: "The Kingdom of God is within you;" there it has been throughout our life; and true dignity consists in ordering one's life in accordance with humanity. What is the will of humanity? It is the full expression of the law of our own being—living in accordance with the moral and intellectual laws of humanity. Thus the revelation, the inspiration passionately dreamed of through such a long vista of ages, is practically realized at last. Science is that inspiration. The sum of demonstrated law is the Gospel. The Bible of the Hebrews becomes but a mere subsidiary part of the Gospel. All great workers have been in the true sense inspired. There is no single incarnation in the Son of the Carpenter. Humanity is incarnate in every son of humanity who may be a Messiah at least to some. Every daughter of humanity is the sister of Christ, and is a type of humanity itself.

The question has been asked whether "humanity" is real. He (the lecturer) would ask: Is the family real? Is the English nation an abstraction? In one sense "humanity" is more real than anything, because it is permanent; we have no reason to think it is mortal. Humanity is more real than any individual; it has a life of its own. He could not understand the state of mind which rejects humanity as an "abstraction," and conceives the idea of God as not an abstraction. What more than this is required as an object for religion? If it can be shown that man can live and die for humanity that is enough. It had been objected that man

requires a person to live and die for. But, as a matter of fact, men *have* lived and died for their country, their people; ~~they~~ have exhibited great devotion for a cause, which is not a person, neither embodied in a person. Such is seen in the history of every cause. This is a new conception of the old object of religious earnestness. Theology is, in a great measure, visionary and unreal, and appeals to one's love of self. All religions try to counteract this tendency. The new idea of religion is as social as it is real. It finds its object in its fellow-man; the society of mankind is its creed. That which is anti-social is, of its very nature, anti-religious. In their religion, is a church, a priest, or a form of worship necessary? These terms will still be used by them, but in a different way than by ordinary sects.

Do the soul and the spirit exist apart from the body? Who can say? How is it possible to have any opinion about any immaterial life, seeing that all our knowledge comes through the channels of the senses? Do men live after death? Of course they do. Their lives continue, though their bodies do not. We cannot understand that there can be consciousness in the absence of a nervous system. In that sense we do not know what it is to live consciously after death. Life is not a nervous system. They live in places where they have never been. We are not as the beasts that perish; their death ends their activity—so far as is known. But the special nature of man is not bestial. It is a subtle faculty of uniting itself with other souls.

The organism of mankind is immortal. Such is the subtle condition of human existence, that the good life becomes incorporated with the immortal humanity. Not a thought is wasted; it develops man in proportion as it is strong or noble; it is continually pulsating. Every good life, every kind word, every good deed, every clear thought, lives. Therefore, man lives, and lives for ever.

[NOTE.—Copied from *The Inquirer* of February 11th, 1888.]



MYSTICISM.<sup>1</sup>

BY W. S. LILLY.

I PROPOSE this afternoon to talk to you a little about Mysticism. Many people in the world, perhaps most, would regard this as equivalent to an announcement that I am going to talk nonsense. Mr. Carlyle has somewhere remarked that when a man speaks to us about a matter which is foreign from our usual thoughts, we are apt, in self-defence as it were, to label him a mystic, by which we mean privately, even if we are too polite to say so openly—a dunce. Should there be any here who, at the outset, are inclined to regard me with this sort of suspicion, let me beg of them to be patient awhile. I shall hope to show them before I have done that Mysticism, so far from being nonsense, is the highest and best sense.

Now we English like to go by the facts. To do so, we are assured on all hands, is the one path of safety.\* I am not disposed to deny that; only I claim to take in all the facts and not one class only arbitrarily selected. Let us go by experience by all means. But we must take *the totality* of experience. Let us consider then a little the facts of life—of everyday life—as we all lead it. I remember some verses of Matthew Arnold—they come from his very beautiful poem *Rugby Chapel*—which give a striking picture of that everyday life:

“What is the course of the life  
Of mortal men on the earth?  
Most men eddy about  
Here and there—eat and drink,  
Chatter and love and hate,

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<sup>1</sup> When I was asked to address the South Place Institute on Mysticism, I was not aware that it was intended to publish my words, and so I did not reduce to writing what I proposed to say. The following pages, dictated from memory subsequently to the delivery of my lecture, give, I believe, a tolerably close account of it. I ought to remark that I employ the term Mysticism, not in the proper theological sense, but in the popular sense, put upon it, as I suppose, by those who invited me to speak: the sense, namely, of *supersensuous knowledge*. No one can regret more than I the confusion of tongues which prevails here, as elsewhere, in the terminology of the present day. A feeling of the Infinite is one thing: a cognition is another.

Gather and squander, are raised  
 Aloft, are hurled in the dust,  
 Striving blindly, achieving  
 Nothing ; and then they die—  
 Perish ! and no one asks  
 Who or what they have been ;  
 More than he asks what waves  
 In the moonlit solitudes wild  
 Of the midmost ocean have swelled,  
 Foamed for a moment, and gone."

How true a picture it is of the lives of most ! How true, in different degrees, of the lives of all ! What "a poor play," as another poet of a different order has told us, life is, if we look upon it in its merely material aspects. "Doth not our life consist of the four elements ?" asks Sir Toby, in *Twelfth Night*. "Nay," replies Sir Andrew Aguecheek, "I think it consists rather of eating and drinking." This witness is true. Deeply corporealized, imprisoned by the senses, we resemble those unhappy men of whom Plato tells us in his famous *Apologue*, which I dare say many of you remember. There they sit, and have sat since childhood, those miserable captives, in their underground cavernous prison, with no opening save one above towards the light, fast bound in misery and iron, not able so much as to turn their heads round, and so seeing nothing but what is straight before them. At a distance above and behind them a bright fire burns, and between the fire and the prisoners there is a raised way, with a low wall built along it, like the screens which the marionette players in ancient Greece put up in front of their audiences, and above which they were wont to display their puppets. Behind this wall walk a number of persons bearing vessels and images of wood and stone and various other materials, talking as they go ; and the captives, sitting without the power of turning their heads, see their own shadows—which is all they see of themselves and each other—and the shadows cast by these objects upon the part of the cavern facing them, and hear the voices thence reverberated, for there is an echo in their prison-house. And they refer these voices, not to the unseen passers-by, of whom they have no knowledge, but to the passing shadows, which they take for realities. Strange and weird conception ! But how true an image of human life until we are enfranchised from the chains of sense. Yes ; Emerson has well said, in words which may fitly serve as the interpretation of this Platonic parable : "Indeed we are but shadows. We are not endowed with real life ; and all that seems most real about us, is but the thinnest substance of a dream, till the heart be touched. That touch creates us : then we begin to be ; thereby we are beings of reality and inheritors of Eternity." "*Until the heart be touched.*" It is that touch that sets us free ;

which rids us of illusions about the make and matter of the phenomenal world; which reveals to us what I may call the ideal—the real being of a thing which causes it to be what it is.

Now this touch of the heart may come to us in many ways. I remember vividly how, in an autumn which seems as I speak to rise before me across the gulf of years, in all its sadness and sweetness, nature was first revealed to me as a living reality; a spirit speaking to my spirit; “a presence that is not to be put by.” I can see now those magnificent woods through which I wandered, finding for the first time “tongues in the trees, books in the running brooks;” hearing for the first time in the moaning of the winds the elegy of the dying year—nay, the burial hymn of the world; reading for the first time the high moralities, the “thoughts that do lie too deep for tears” inscribed on the falling leaves and the fading flowers. I dare say many in this room can remember a like awakening of their own inner life; and can enter into what Amiel has expressed in a very fine passage, which came into my mind as I was sitting this morning in my library, thinking about what I should say to you this afternoon. Writing at Lancy, in the early spring of 1852, he exclaims: “How are all things transfigured at a moment like this! The world is an allegory; the ideal is more real than any fact. Fairy tales and legends are as true as natural history; nay, truer, for as emblems they are more transparent. The only substance is the soul. What are all other things? Shadow, pretence, figure, symbol, and dream. Consciousness alone is immortal, objective, utterly real. The world is but a pyrotechnic display, a sublime panorama, intended to delight and educate the soul. Consciousness is a universe of which the soul is love.”

Let me in this connection turn to a great English poet—great not only in his inspiration but in his sobriety—who more perhaps than any other poet has realized the occult sympathy between the human soul and external nature. There is a fine passage in his *Excursion*, which I must take leave to quote:—

“Such was the boy—but for the growing youth  
What soul was his, when, from the naked top  
Of some bold headland, he beheld the sun  
Rise up, and bathe the world in light! He looked—  
Ocean and earth, the solid frame of earth  
And ocean’s liquid mass, in gladness lay  
Beneath him.—Far and wide the clouds were touched,  
And in their silent faces could he read  
Unutterable love. Sound needed none,  
Nor any voice of joy; his spirit drank  
The spectacle: sensation, soul, and form,  
All melted into him; they swallowed up  
His animal being; in them did he live,  
And by them did he live; they were his life.

In such access of mind, in such high hour  
Of visitation from the living God,  
Thought was not ; in enjoyment it expired.  
No thanks he breathed, he proffered no request ;  
Rapt into still communion that transcends  
The imperfect offices of prayer and praise,  
His mind was a thanksgiving to the power  
That made him : it was blessedness and love ! "

So much for External Nature as an instrument potent to touch the heart, as a revealing agency, as a path into the transcendental, "as a means through which the Deity who works unseen behind it, pours trust and love which transform our own capabilities into realities." And now let us turn to Art, for which I claim the same high function. We rightly talk of artistic inspiration. The true artist is a *seer*. He is the man whose eyes are opened. The aim of the artist is to body forth, whatever be the instrument with which he works—be it the brush, the chisel, "the concord of sweet sounds," or "ordered words"—to body forth something which he discerns in the "high reason of his fancies" more clearly than other men. I do not know who has better brought out this truth than Schopenhauer—one of the finest and subtlest thinkers of the age, however much his system, as a whole, may repel us. The function of Art he considers is the deliverance of men from the chain of vulgar realities which binds us to the phenomenal world, by presenting the things that have veritable being, the permanent essential forms, immutable, and ever true. Thus do I account of Art in general, and of its high function in the life of man. I can but glance at the subject and pass on. But let me, before I do pass on, read to you the august words in which the greatest living master of our language has expressed this view about one of the Arts—Music:—

"Let us take another instance," says Cardinal Newman, "of an outward and earthly form, or economy, under which great wonders unknown seem to be typified ; I mean musical sounds, as they are exhibited most perfectly in instrumental harmony. There are seven notes in the scale, make them fourteen, yet what a slender outfit for so vast an enterprise ! What science brings so much out of so little ? Out of what poor elements does some great master in it create his new world ! Shall we say that all this exuberant inventiveness is a mere ingenuity or trick of art, like some game or fashion of the day, without reality and without meaning ? We may do so. To many men the very names which the science employs are utterly incomprehensible. To speak of an idea or a subject seems to be fanciful or trifling, to speak of the views which it opens upon us to be childish extravagance ; yet is

it possible that that inexhaustible evolution and disposition of notes, so rich yet so simple, so intricate yet so regulated, so various yet so majestic, should be a mere sound, which is gone and perishes?

"Can it be that those mysterious stirrings of heart, and keen emotions, and strange yearnings after we know not what, and awful impressions from we know not whence, should be wrought in us by what is unsubstantial, and comes and goes, and begins and ends, in itself? It is not so; it cannot be. No, they have escaped from some higher sphere; they are the outpourings of eternal harmony in the medium of created sound; they are echoes from our home; they are the voice of angels, or the Magnificat of saints, or the living laws of Divine governance, or the Divine attributes; something are they besides themselves which we cannot compass, which we cannot utter."

I go on to another instrument of our emancipation—Philosophy. Now the very object of all Philosophy worthy of that august name is the supersensuous. A mere system of speculative physics—like, let me say, Mr. Herbert Spencer's—however ingenious and interesting, I cannot account of as Philosophy at all. Philosophy is a theory of being, of speculative thought: its proper object to contemplate the world as a manifestation of spirit. As Von Hartmann truly says, it is essentially concerned with the one feeling only to be mystically apprehended, namely, the relation of the individual with the Absolute. Its very function is to raise man above the self of the senses and animal nature, to approximate him to the Divine. Hence Aristotle, in speaking the praises of the life philosophic is led to say: "If the gods in any way concern themselves with human affairs, as is indeed held to be the case, it is but reasonable to suppose that they should take pleasure in that which is of all things the highest and the most akin to the divine nature; that is to say, the reason; and that to those who give all their love to this, and hold it in the highest honour, they should make some return of kindness, upon the ground that such men bestow their care upon that which they themselves hold dear, and that they act rightly herein and nobly. Now that it is of the philosopher that all this is pre-eminently true is almost self-evident."

I must not dwell further upon this high matter. Let me go on to another portal into the transcendental: those Emotions and Sentiments of Human Nature which are really symbols of something deeper; according to that fine saying of St. Bernard, "The more I know of myself the more I know of God." Take the passion of love, for example, the most masterful and the most

universal of all. I do not speak of that merely animal impulse which man has in common with moths and mollusca: but of love, as it actually exists among civilized men and women, transformed in a greater or less degree, by the imaginative faculty. Well, what an instrument of emancipation from the senses love is!

“ . . . for indeed I know  
Of no more subtle master under heaven,  
Than is the maiden passion for a maid;  
Not only to keep down the base in man  
But teach high thoughts and amiable words,  
And love of truth and all that makes a man.”

“To keep down the base, to teach high thoughts.” Yes. Love lifts us above self. It opens for us the gates of the transcendental world. And so of other human emotions. Terror like love lets us into infinity. The effect of tragedy, the Greek philosophers held, was thus to work an intellectual purgation. “The dramatist shows us some elemental force of humanity, stripped of the accidents of time and place, working itself out in free conflict with other forces, and finally breaking itself against the eternal fact that no man can gain the world without losing himself. It is this catastrophe which makes the real tragedy of life; it is this that the tragic poet has the eye to see and the words to portray; and in proportion as we follow him in imagination, we come away from the spectacle with our hearts broken and purged, strengthened to face the fact and obey the law.” I may affirm the same even more strongly of sorrow, “’Tis said that sorrow makes us wise.” It is a great sacrament: the outward visible sign of an inward spiritual grace whereby we are taken—if but for a moment—beyond the veil. When we are led to submit our will to the Divine Goodness, trusting it in the dark, we break through into Eternity; we are at one with the Secret Power which dwells there, and holds up and disposes all things, sweetly and strongly. This is the core of nature which, as Goethe says, must be looked for in a man’s heart. This is the Everlasting Yea.

But of course the most universal instrument to touch the heart, and to awaken in us the life of the spirit, is Religion. Cardinal Newman has said with much happiness that there is no such thing as a false religion, whatever the amount of error which may be mixed up with any. All religions have done something to lift man above the senses, to idealize life. Is it possible to conceive of anything more distasteful to the thoughtful and cultivated than the blood-and-fire gospel which the Salvationists howl through the streets of our cities, making day hideous? Yet I, for my part, wish these noisy fanatics God-speed, although I should be glad if they could do their work more melodiously.

They touch the hearts of thousands who else would live merely animal lives—nay, lives below the level of the animals. They open for them the world of Spirit and Deity however coarse and grimy their keys. It seems to me that the proper attitude to what we deem popular superstition is well indicated by Mr. Herbert Spencer. "Through the great body of dogmas, traditions, and rites, a soul of truth is always visible, clearly or dimly as the case may be. . . . Though from higher perceptions they hide the abstract verity within them, yet to lower perceptions they render this verity more appreciable than it would otherwise be. They serve to make real and influential over men that which would otherwise be unreal and uninfluential. Or we may call them the protective envelopes, without which the contained truth would die; . . . modes of the manifestation of The Unknowable, and as having this for their warrant." Zeal against superstition! Good, if usually a trifle ridiculous. But superstition is not the worst of errors. Take care that while you root up the tares you do not root up the wheat also; that in trying to purify the popular belief you do not destroy it. There is in the *Mesnevî* Sherîf of Jelâlu-d'-Dîn, the illustrious Saint and Doctor of Islâm, a striking and pathetic story, in which this great lesson, so little apprehended by the sectaries, whether of Puritanism or of Physics, is powerfully inculcated. "Moses," we read, "in his wanderings in the wilderness, came upon a shepherd, who was praying to God in the fervour of his soul, and saying, 'Oh, my Master, my Lord, would that I knew where I might find Thee, and become Thy servant. Would that I might tie thy shoe-latchet, and comb Thy hair, and wash Thy robes, and kiss Thy beautiful feet, and sweep Thy chamber, and serve the milk of my goats to Thee for whom my heart crieth out.' And the anger of Moses was kindled, and he said to the shepherd, 'Thou blasphemest. The Most High has no body, and no need of clothing, nor of nourishment, nor of a chamber, nor of a domestic; thou art an infidel.' And the heart of the shepherd was darkened, for he could make to himself no image of one without bodily form and corporal wants: and he gave himself up to despair and ceased to serve God. And God spake unto Moses and said, 'Why hast thou driven My servant away from Me? Every man has received from Me his mode of being, his way of speech. What is evil in thee is good in another. What is poison to thee is honey to him. Words are nothing to Me. I regard the heart. The compass serves only to direct the prayers of those who are without the Kêbeh. Within, no one knows the use of it.'" Such is the apologue of the great Sûfi, and surely it is well worth pondering. We are too apt to undervalue that exceeding great multitude of

people who are simply good and religious-minded, wholly undisturbed by the anxious questionings which shake the world. They are not intellectually considerable; mostly fools, perhaps. Yes. But diviner lips than Carlyle's have said, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones." "Babes and sucklings!" I grant it. But to them are revealed things hidden from the wise and prudent. In the house of the Father of spirits are many mansions. And let not him who dwells in the *templa serena* of elevated thought despise the fetish-worshippers before their shrines, the Peculiar People in their tabernacles, the Salvationists in their "barracks." Unconsciously, passively, they, it may well be, possess that higher synthesis after which we so passionately toil, where the problems which perplex us melt into floating clouds, as we stand for a moment above them in sunshine and serene air.

I have spoken to you of External Nature, of Art, of Philosophy, of Human Emotions, of Religion, as all instruments potent to touch the heart, to open the portals of the transcendental world. Now what is the issue of all this? The issue is the undoubted fact on which Mysticism is built: this, namely, that the spirit of man comes in contact with a higher spirit, whose manifestations carry with them their own proof and are moral in their nature, out of time and place, enlightening, purifying, and therefore, in a true sense, ascetic. And this is the universal mystic element in religion, in the true sense of the word. For what is that sense? Not a concatenation of formulas, or a tissue of speculations; not pulpit eloquence, hierarchical domination, the greatest happiness of the greatest number, or any other idol of the den or the market place; but the true tie between our spirit and the Father of our spirits—a transcendental mode of the soul, by which it soars into the Empyrean and is brought back to its eternal beginning. This Theism of the natural order, if you like so to call it, has ten thousand sacraments, infinite and ever new symbols, and each man may minister at its altar. This is what I mean by Mysticism; heart-religion John Wesley called it. In this heart-religion every great faith in the world has originated. By this heart-religion every great faith lives. When this heart-religion dies out of it, its work is done, and its days are numbered; it petrifies into mere formalism. And then it falls to pieces, and its place knows it no more. Of course we have this treasure in earthen vessels. But the treasure is there, however poor the shrine. Or, to change the metaphor: in all those higher faiths which perform so important a part in mystical philosophy and theology, there is a true light—the light of life. Earthborn clouds may arise and obscure or distort it. But it is there, that kindly light, guiding men on amid the encircling gloom.



So much may suffice, then, to vindicate the position with which I set out—that Mysticism is not nonsense but good sense; nay, the best. And now the clock warns me that I have already trespassed sufficiently upon your patience. There are, however, just a very few practical words which I should like to say in conclusion about the abuse and the use of Mysticism. The abuse is obvious. Mysticism is an experience of the Infinite as real as that experience which we found upon the knowledge of the sensible and finite. It is subject to the same laws and conditions also, to the limitations of our nature; and therefore may issue in utter madness or gross sensuality, precisely as an exclusive study of material phenomena may issue in degradation of the intellect. I need not enlarge upon what is so clear in itself, and is so sadly illustrated by many pages of history. My present object is to dwell upon it in its normal and healthy aspect as “human nature’s daily food.” My view of Mysticism, then, as I have at length brought out, is that it is an opening of the eyes of the soul,—a deliverance from that worst captivity when the mind darkened by sense becomes “the dungeon of itself.” Whatever be the instrument of our emancipation, the effect is to let “us pent-up creatures through, into Eternity—our due.” I may observe in passing that one naturally uses the words of the poets in speaking of this subject, and with reason, for truth has two languages—the language of poetry and the language of prose; but the language of poetry is the most august and the better fitted for the expression of the higher verities. But to return. I take the office of Mysticism to be this: to conduct us from the phenomenal to the noumenal, from that which seems to that which is. Now what is that which is but truth, justice, love, freedom, all different aspects of one thing; nay, I venture to say of One Person—the Absolute and Eternal, who is the Supreme Reason? This is the office, then, of Mysticism, to enable us to discern that Reason which is at the heart of things and which is in our hearts, to realize that we are one with that Transcendent Ideal, which is the Supremely Real; not bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh, but—far closer union—reason of His reason and spirit of His spirit. This is the light of life; and in that light should we walk—as children of the light. The supremacy of that Divine gift within us, speaking to our heart, through our conscience—this is the conclusion of the whole matter. It is the conclusion of Philosophy, which finds reason the highest principle in the universe. It is the conclusion of Poetry, which finds the world the expression of reason. It is the conclusion of Jurisprudence, which finds in reason the regulating principle of social life. Now not all of us are called to be philosophers, or poets, or lawgivers; but we are all men endowed

with "this capability and Godlike reason." Let it not "fust in us unused." *Est Deus in nobis*. We all have that Divine gift. Marcus Aurelius calls it the *daimon*—the deity—within us. Let me end with the admirable lesson of that imperial sage who has shown us that "even in a palace life may be well led." "Live with the gods. And he does live with the gods who constantly shows to them that his own soul is satisfied with that which is assigned to him, and that he does all that the *daimon* wishes which Zeus has assigned to every man for his guardian and guidance—a portion of himself. And this *daimon* is every man's understanding and reason."

## ESOTERIC BUDDHISM.

*BY A. P. SINNETT.*

THE system of thought which has been described as "Esoteric Buddhism" deals with a highly practical matter—the leading conclusions of a living science closely associated with the welfare of the human race at the present day—in Europe as well as in Asia. The science to which I refer is Theosophy;—literally, Divine Wisdom—the science of spiritual things; and that science is closely associated in one of its aspects with the study of the essential principles of religious belief. Theosophists have no preconceived attachment to one presentation or form of religious belief rather than to another. They are in pursuit of truth pure and simple, convinced that there must be a real state of the facts in regard to such problems as the origin and destiny of the soul, as well as in reference to the chemical affinities of the elements, or the relations of heat and electricity. And they find that the comparison of various religious beliefs will often enable them to eliminate the superficial corruptions of each, so that the residual doctrines, reduced to their lowest terms, their most abstract expression, will then be found practically identical, even when the first glance at their esoteric aspects seemed to reveal great discrepancies. In this way the study of any great religion in its esoteric aspect is a theosophical undertaking. But some religions may be better adapted than others for such study; and special opportunities may present themselves to special groups of theosophical students which facilitate special lines of inquiry. In this way I have found one religion in particular especially instructive when examined in the spirit just described, and that religion is Buddhism.

Ours has been an age of invention and discovery, and powers latent in those regions of Nature that used to be called the elements—in earth, air, fire, and water—have been called out of their hiding-places and trained to apply their energies to the daily service of man. They were all there long before we suspected their existence. Water must always have been converted into steam whenever it felt the influence of heat, long

before mechanicians had perceived that light wreaths of vapours properly manipulated might drive machinery and ships. Every girl in the middle ages whose hair crackled in dry weather when she combed it, developed a certain amount of electricity, without having the faintest idea that the sparkles of light she drew forth could be made to travel thousands of miles in a second and carry messages. Now, however, our eyes have been opened, and we see a good deal more in the world than was seen by our ancestors. We see, not merely the mechanism which is our own handiwork, but laws of incomparable sublimity asserting themselves in the inter-action of matter. We have grown used to working with ideas that are altogether intangible,—with such ideas as the conservation of energy, the principle of evolution, the molecular constitution of matter. These conceptions are great beams of light cast upon the immensity of Nature, by means of which we may come to understand, to some extent, mysteries that are being enacted within, around, and above us.

And surely the promise of such past achievement may encourage us to expect the expansion of exact scientific knowledge into that still superior region of nature which has to do with the phenomena of human consciousness. People wedded to ecclesiastical systems are, it is true, generally opposed to inquiries in this direction. The Church has always resisted the growth of knowledge, from the days when it imprisoned Galileo to these, in which it is powerless to do more than avert its gaze, with an offended air, from the testimony of the rocks. Again, at the other end of the scale, other persons have so violently resented the superstitions and crimes of the churches that they have somehow come to dislike the whole subject of the future life, and to feel insulted if you talk to them about the soul. But, midway between them, stand some observers of Nature who have become aware of the fact—perhaps by personal contact with some secluded phenomena—that it is possible to learn a good deal more about the Soul and the laws of its evolution than popular science has yet suspected. Such persons come to realise the stupendous importance of the knowledge they find themselves acquiring, and if they see the advantage of availing themselves not merely of their own opportunities, whatever these may be, but of the accumulated discoveries stored up, though guarded from rash intruders, in the past, they become theosophists, whether calling themselves by that name or by any other, and students perhaps, among other subjects, of “Esoteric Buddhism.”

There have been theosophists in the world for long ages before that phrase was coined; but they knew it was quite useless to attempt the wide diffusion of their knowledge as long as ecclesi-

astical authority reigned supreme, torturing and killing all who were even a little in advance of their generation. So the true philosophers of olden times wrote only, in obscure symbolical or allegorical language, for the service of students abnormally developed like themselves, and for that, perhaps, of this later age, when we are in a position to unravel a good deal of their writing, finding it in exact harmony with our own latest discoveries in the psychic constitution of man. But now circumstances have changed. Modern adepts in theosophic wisdom show a more confiding spirit than their predecessors. Hence the sudden burst of information as to what the ancient wisdom teaches, which has been associated with the growth and development of the Theosophical Society, and has coloured modern literature in so remarkable a way that great numbers of people have become familiar with its leading ideas without stopping to inquire from what fountain they flow.

The science of theosophy, therefore—the highly practical science of theosophy, as I have already called it—is that which seeks to push our knowledge of Nature's laws on in advance of the finest discoveries of modern civilization, keeping hand-in-hand with these, but ever pressing onward into the region of consciousness and super-material existence, guided by the light already in the world;—which has been in the world from the first beginnings of that union between divinity and matter which constitutes the sentient universe. The laws of divinity are the subject of the research, and in the essential principles of religion we must follow the suggestions of their working; not in creeds compiled by political priests, but in the fundamental beliefs of humanity. The soul of man is the phenomenon we have to investigate—the “first matter” of the alchemist—and the newest experiments in psychic sensibility may subserve the study.

Foremost among the conceptions to which the study thus conducted will bring us may be placed the doctrine or principle of re-incarnation, a law the discovery of which is as important to the student of spiritual science as that of the correlation of forces in the physical world. This doctrine has been caricatured by ignorant or profane writers in former ages—or perhaps disguised by those who knew better—in the shape in which it is commonly spoken of as the Transmigration of Souls. To this day non-theosophic persons will be found who imagine it to imply, for Oriental believers—the idea expressed by the latter phrase—namely, the passage after death of human souls into animal bodies. Nor am I asserting that *no* Easterns of the lower class are so ignorant as to take it in this signification. But the belief of all cultivated Buddhists or Hindoos is identical with the

doctrine as understood by theosophists—namely, the doctrine of the evolution of the human soul through a long series of human lives. In re-incarnation we recognize the method adopted by Nature for growing a human being,—for growing that which is the human being as distinct from the organism of flesh and blood through which it manifests on the plane of physical phenomena. The life-history of a human being is *not* supposed by theosophists to consist of a miraculous commencement *ex nihilo* at birth, a short run of physical existence for a handful of years, followed by an unalterable eternity of personal consciousness in heaven. The analogies of Nature are discerned by esoteric science to assert themselves in the growth of a soul, in the growth of vegetable organism, and in the growth of a solar system. The soul of a Papuan savage is seen to be as true a human entity as the soul of a Newton or a Shakespeare. But the laws of the evolutionary process on which it is launched provide for its gradual acquisition by an almost awfully protracted series of life experiences on the physical plane, of the intellectual capacities manifest in the more advanced types of humanity. From few of his earlier lives can the slowly evolving soul or ego gather a great deal of knowledge or experience; from some it may scarcely gather any. But as the dropping water in the limestone cavern gradually builds up the basaltic column the successive life experiences of primitive man gradually mould his psychic consciousness and capacity.

But the modern critic of re-incarnation, bewildered and incredulous, objects, "We never remember any of these former lives." Of course we do not. If we did the system would fail in its operation, and would find itself bereft of the qualifications which render it endurable to the gradually evolving entity. For each successive life of the physical series is separated from its preceding and succeeding lives by intervals of spiritual consciousness on a plane of nature wholly imperceptible to ordinary senses. The personal consciousness of man is not annihilated by the death of the body. It passes on into a condition of consciousness which is vaguely foreshadowed by the conception of heaven entertained by conventional theology. The similar conceptions of hell with which those of heaven are balanced in popular religion have realities behind them too; but though it may be difficult to enter the kingdom of heaven, it is happily impossible for the purblind humanity of our epoch to acquire a lasting tenancy of the supreme realm of spiritual evil. Re-incarnation itself provides the punishment, or consequence appropriate to all commonplace forms of evil-doing; and the exquisitely scientific adjustment of moral cause and effect in this respect will be apparent as we go on.

For in most lives, it will be seen on reflection, there are some impulses of a spiritual character, however heavily loaded these may be, as a rule, with earthly desires and with sinful sacrifices on the altar of self. If there is nothing more in a life to associate it with spiritual conditions than *some* affection for other human beings, *some* unselfish admiration for the beauty of Nature, some passing aspiration in the direction of self-improvement, that would be enough to colour a human consciousness with thoughts and feelings capable of vibrating on the plane of spiritual existence. And, forgetting the grovelling needs of the body, when these should be no longer emphasized for him by the union of his consciousness with a fleshly organism, the man released from the physical plane by death, will find these higher thoughts and emotions, be they few or many, feeble or intense, filling the area of his new existence. There are, it is true, some intervening phases of purification through which he must pass before the old clinging to the habits of life—which beset the soul still when it first leaves the earth-life—can be fully shaken off. And these phases of purification are profoundly interesting to all serious students of psychic phenomena. They have a great deal to do with the explanation of such phenomena, and the passage of an emancipated soul through these intervening states may be almost immeasurably brief or exceedingly protracted. But that is a branch of the subject which may be conveniently put aside while we are first studying the general principles of re-incarnation, associated as they are with the intervening periods of spiritual consciousness.

The soul, launched after death on its metaphysical period of consciousness, is existing in a condition of Nature in which there is no room for the play of the lower passions and desires belonging to the earth-life. The change that has taken place involves a forgetfulness of these for the time being; but it does not involve a forgetfulness of any personal emotion of a sufficiently elevated character to have free play on the conditions by which the soul-ego is then surrounded. The soul in heaven is never troubled with the thought of having died. It is simply filled with a blissful consciousness of the full fruition of its higher emotions. There may be human beings for whom even the full fruition of the higher emotions, supposing these to have been meagre or rare in earth-life, is but a colourless existence compared to others; but whatever there is of it, so to speak, is blissful in its character; while for others, in whom love has been a powerful factor of life, or in whom the upward aspirations, which make piety so beautiful an emotion, even when it is but little illuminated by an accurate comprehension of spiritual science, have been persistent and

intense, will find the full fruition of *their* higher thoughts and feelings a gloriously vivid and intense existence. They may have done wrong, as most of us do, more or less, during life; they may have set in motion causes which must operate eventually to bring about an effect of suffering; but these causes may be only adapted to find their expression on the earth plane of existence, and will therefore await the next re-incarnation of the soul before they are developed. The spiritual period—the “devachanic” period, to give it the convenient Eastern name, which is passing into common use with most modern theosophists—is a period of rest and refreshment and enjoyment in the highest sense of the term.

And it will be seen that, just because its intensity and character are due to the spiritual forces which have been set in activity during the earth life of the ego, so also its duration depends upon the energy expended in providing for it. The “person” in question remains the same person that he was on earth as long as the capacity for personal consciousness, that he has developed as such, continues in operation. He can only be drawn back to the earth life—to re-incarnation—when the force which has carried him into the spiritual plane of Nature—into heaven—has exhausted itself. And when we are talking of the exhaustion of a great human love, for example, we are talking of a process which necessarily takes a long time. There are people who, with pardonable enthusiasm, imagine such a feeling must last “for ever.” But effects are proportionate to causes; and though we need not even dispute the position as an abstract possibility,—that love may last for ever,—it is destined in that case to undergo exaltations of character corresponding to the vast possibilities of cosmic progress which Nature reserves for humanity. Without going fully into these, we may recognize that in the majority of cases the personal relationships of any given individual resolve themselves into mysterious spiritual abstractions, no longer requiring for their expression the persistence of the personal consciousness out of which they may have taken their rise. And when this change is complete, the soul-ego has forgotten its last earth-life. It is ready for re-incarnation, and it re-incarnates under the attraction of its latent affinities, as regards the physical plane of existence, carried over, though completely divorced from specific memories,—from the life it spent last on earth.

In this *statement* of the doctrine of re-incarnation, I have not paused to set forth the considerations which may almost be regarded as proving it to be in accordance with the real course of events. These proofs are elaborate and intricate, and claim the application of acute metaphysical insight to the phenomena of psychic experimentation. It is enough for the moment to say



that the study of theosophy is one from which adequately qualified inquirers rise with a conviction as to the reality of the evolutionary process before us, as complete as those which relate to the inductions of physical science.

But the statement itself—from which in a brief treatise of this nature the long processes of demonstration must be omitted—would be incomplete as such if it were not fortified by an explanation of the theosophic theory, or rather of the system of law on which re-incarnation depends,—that, namely, which is known to modern inquiry in connection with these subjects by the Oriental term “karma.” Like re-incarnation itself, karma is the subject of gross misrepresentation by the esoteric students of Oriental religions. Karma is often described as a Buddhist idea, according to which one person dies and perishes outright, while later on some other person is born who becomes the unconscious heir of the former person’s “karma” or “doing.” The notion so defined is grotesque and ridiculous; but as with so many caricatures there is a truth behind it. To apprehend the true operation of the law we must realize the difference between the two ideas most conveniently defined in English speech by the terms “personality” and “individuality.” By individuality we mean the persistent self-consciousness of a true soul-ego. That consciousness is something quite independent of any specific adventures which may befall the individual during any limited period of its existence. Take any commonplace illustration from the experience of daily life. Five years ago let any one of us select, for example, in imagination, some single, uneventful, unremarkable day that he may have spent. During that day his consciousness may have been pretty completely concentrated on the trivial incidents of the moment. The newspaper he read, the work he did, the meals he ate, may have engaged his attention at the time, to the exclusion of loftier thoughts and pursuits. For the purpose of our hypothesis let us say they did. But underneath the consciousness of these there lay a potentiality of other phases of consciousness. Years revolve, and the man undergoes many serious changes of character and surroundings. But the inner ego, the centre of consciousness, the true individuality, is the same at the later period as during the former day, which by the hypothesis he will completely have forgotten. For the purposes of this rough illustration let us put aside possibilities concerning latent memory, though they would strengthen rather than weaken the analogy if we went into them fully. All I wish to enforce for the moment is that just what the single forgotten day is to the whole life, our complete physical life may be to the whole individuality. The one life is “personality”—in its true etymological sense, the mask,—which

the individuality, the real ego, puts on for the time being. And it is the man himself and no "other," who is born again, when after a period of devachanic rest, in the course of which he has worked out and fully exhaled his last personality, he is invested by the operation of karma with a new one.

Now karma is the law of cause and effect in the moral world, as applied to life. It may be called, by rather a base degradation of the idea, a system of rewards and punishments; but a truly philosophical view of Nature prefers to regard suffering as a consequence of, rather than a punishment of, evil-doing, and happiness as a consequence in the other direction. Either way, in its operation on the processes of re-incarnation it constitutes the whole mass of affinities which cause the birth of each re-incarnating individual in such and such conditions of life, with such and such parents, destinies, organism, and so forth. It provides the apparently entangled web of opportunities, joys, and sorrows, which the human being has earned or merited during his last physical life, by all that other no less complicated entanglement of his deeds, good and evil, which had reference to the earth-life. In the blissful repose of the devachanic period he may have exhausted some of his good karma, but natural law, which has been in no hurry to punish him when he died, must, nevertheless, exact its full due in the long run; and when his consciousness returns to the plane of its former physical misdeeds, it is in presence of conditions but too well adapted to bear their harvest of suffering. Not unjustly, therefore, may the earth-life be described as the vale of tears, but it is none the less the sphere of beneficent causation, and from the midst of its tribulation, karma may be engendered that may lead to immeasurably more exalted conditions of consciousness and existence.

Or, to put the idea in more truly theosophic language, karma may be exhausted by an adequately sustained effort, and then re-incarnation itself may come to an end for the individual concerned. This is the true meaning of that aspiration towards non-existence *on the physical plane* which is a leading characteristic of Buddhist literature, and which many ill-informed critics of Buddhism so absurdly misrepresent as equivalent to a craving for annihilation. When *bad* karma ceases to load the individual, it is no more drawn back into the physical earth-life; but that spiritual condition which has been already described, as enjoyed for limited periods by each human soul *between* its periods of physical existence, becomes at once permanent for the enfranchised ego, and correspondingly exalted in character. It is towards this result, as the supreme achievement of his evolution, that the Buddhist is taught to strive.

In order that this hasty survey of the great esoteric doctrine may afford all necessary aids to reflection concerning its wonderfully comprehensive and harmonious character, it is necessary that I should say a few words in conclusion on one all-important point.

The human ego, as manifested in the flesh, is, after all, the expression of only one phase of its being. Concurrently with its existence as an incarnate person, it is capable of an existence and of consciousness—alternating with its waking consciousness in the body—on higher planes of nature. The consciousness of the lower or physical phase of its existence does not embrace the higher or spiritual phase, but the higher does in a large degree embrace the consciousness of the physical personality. It is, therefore,—relatively to the more restricted personality,—the real ego, the inner man, or the “higher self,” as it has most generally been described in recent theosophic writings. The consideration of all the characteristics and inherent possibilities connected with this higher self would claim very prolonged treatment. The full comprehension of the laws which govern its existence and progress, and of its capacity when functioning in the higher regions of nature to which it properly belongs, would, indeed, involve an amount of knowledge concerning spiritual conditions which could not be expressed in language, or condensed, so to speak, within a physical brain. But at the same time *some* knowledge concerning the higher self is essential to a correct appreciation of any problems connected with re-incarnation, devachanic existence, or spiritual evolution.

And the clue to the real identity of the individual through all the long series of physical lives, which from the point of view of each in turn he thinks he has forgotten, is to be found in reflections on the nature of the higher self, and on the insufficiency of the ordinary waking consciousness of a physical human being to reflect the whole consciousness of the real spiritual being which lies behind, within, or above the mask of personality.

## THE GOSPEL OF SECULARISM.

BY G. W. FOOTE.

THE old faiths ruin and rend, and the air is vocal with the clamour of new systems, each protesting itself *the* Religion of the Future. Sweet sentimental Deism claims first attention, because it retains what is thought to be the essence of old beliefs after discarding their reality. Next comes Positivism, far nobler and more vital, which manages to make itself well heard, having a few strong and skilful pleaders, who never lose sight of their creed whatever subject they happen to be treating. But Secularism, which, in England at least, is numerically far more important than Positivism, although gladly heard by thousands of common people, is scarcely known at all in circles of highest education where its principles are most powerfully operant.

Yet the word *secular* is entering more and more into our general vocabulary, and\*in especial has become associated with that view of national education which denies the propriety of religious teaching in Board Schools. This use of the word points to the principle on which Secularism is based. The interests of this world and life are *secular*, and can be estimated and furthered by our unaided intellects ; the interests of another life and world can be dealt with only by appealing to *Revelation*. Secularism proposes to cultivate the splendid provinces of Time, leaving the theologians to care for the realms of Eternity, and meaning to interfere with them only while their pursuit of salvation in another life hinders the attainment of real welfare in this.

Mr. Gladstone's conception of Secularism, derived of course from its literature, may here be cited. After describing the Sceptic, the Atheist, and the Agnostic he proceeds :—

"Then comes the *Secularist*. Him I understand to stop short of the three former schools in that he does not of necessity assert anything but the positive and exclusive claims of the purposes, the enjoyments, and the needs presented to us in the world of sight and experience. He does not require in principle even the universal suspense of Scepticism ; but, putting the two worlds into two scales of value, he finds that the one weighs much, the other either nothing or nothing that can be appreciated. At the

utmost he is like a chemist, who, in a testing analysis, after putting into percentage all that he can measure, if he finds something behind so minute as to refuse any quantitative estimate, calls it by the name of 'trace.'"<sup>1</sup>

This account of Secularism is on the whole very fair, but evidently it requires much amplification before it can be perfectly understood by those who have not, like Mr. Gladstone, read secular literature for themselves.

Were I obliged to give an approximate definition of Secularism in one sentence, I should say that it is naturalism in morals as distinguished from supernaturalism; meaning by this that the criterion of morality is derivable from reason and experience, and that its ground and guarantee exist in human nature independently of any theological belief. Mr. G. J. Holyoake, whose name is inseparably associated with Secularism, says: "Secularism relates to the present existence of man and to actions the issue of which can be tested by the experience of life." And again: "Secularism means the moral duty of man deduced from considerations which pertain to this life alone. Secularism purposes to regulate human affairs by considerations purely human." The second of these quotations is clearly more comprehensive than the first, and is certainly a better expression of the view entertained by the vast majority of Secularists. It dismisses theology from all control over the practical affairs of this life, and banishes it to the region of speculation. The commonest intelligence may see that this doctrine, however innocent it looks on paper, is in essence and practice revolutionary. It makes a clean sweep of all that theologians regard as most significant and precious. Dr. Newman in his *Grammar of Assent*, writes: "By Religion I mean the knowledge of God, of His will, of our duties towards Him;" and he adds that the channels which nature furnishes for our acquiring this knowledge, "teach us the Being and Attributes of God, our responsibility to Him, our dependence upon Him, our prospect of reward or punishment, to be somehow brought about, according as we obey or disobey Him." A better definition of what is generally deemed religion could not be found, and such religion as this Secularism will have no concern with. From their point of view orthodox teachers are justified in calling it irreligious; but those Secularists who agree with Carlyle that whoever believes in the infinite nature of Duty has a religion, repudiate the epithet *irreligious* just as they repudiate the epithet *infidel*, for the popular connotation of both includes something utterly inapplicable to Secularism as they understand

<sup>1</sup> *Contemporary Review*, June 1876.

it. Properly speaking, they assert, Secularism is not irreligious, but untheological ; yet, as it entirely excludes from the sphere of human duty what most people regard as religion, it must explain and justify itself.

Secularism rejects theology as a guide and authority in the affairs of this life, because its pretensions are not warranted by its evidence. Natural Theology, to use a common but half paradoxical phrase, never has been nor can be aught but a body of speculation, admirable enough in its way, perhaps, but quite irreducible to the level of experience. Indeed, one's strongest impression in reading treatises on that branch of metaphysics is, that they are not so much proofs as excuses of faith, and would never have been written if the ideas sought to be verified had not already been enounced in Revelation. As for Revealed Religion, it is based upon miracles, and these to the scientific mind are altogether inadmissible, being trebly discredited. In the first place, they are at variance with the general fact of order in nature, the largest vessel or conception into which all our experiences flow ; adverse to the law of Universal Causation which underlies all scientific theories, and guides all scientific research. Next, the natural history of miracles shows us how they arise, and makes us view them as phenomena of superstition, manifesting a certain coherence and order because the human imagination which gave birth to them is subject to laws, however baffling and subtle. All miracles had their origin from one and the same natural source. The belief in their occurrence invariably characterizes certain stages of mental development, and gradually fades away as these are left farther and farther behind. They are not *historical* but *psychological* phenomena, not *actual* but merely *mental*, not *proofs* but *results* of faith. The miracles of Christianity are no exception to this rule ; they stand in the same category as all others. As Mr. Arnold aptly observes : " The time has come when the minds of men no longer put as a matter of course the Bible miracles in a class by themselves. Now, from the moment this time commences, from the moment that the comparative history of all miracles is a conception entertained, and a study admitted, the conclusion is certain, the reign of the Bible miracles is doomed." Lastly, miracles are discredited for the reason insisted on by Mr. Greg, namely, that if we admit them, they prove nothing but the fact of their occurrence. If God is our Author, He has endowed us with reason, and to the bar of that reason the utterances of the most astounding miracle-workers must ultimately come ; if condemned there, the miracles will afford them no aid ; if approved there, the miracles will be to them useless.

Miracles, then, are fatally discredited in every way. Yet upon them all Revelations are founded, and even Christianity, as Dr. Newman urged against the orators of the Tamworth Reading Room, "is a history supernatural, and almost scenic." Thus, if Natural Theology is merely speculative, and irreducible to the level of experience, Revealed Religion, though more substantial, is erected upon a basis which modern science and criticism have hopelessly undermined.

Now, if we relinquish belief in miracles, we cannot retain belief in Special Providence, and the Efficacy of Prayer, for these are simply aspects of the miraculous. Good-natured Adolf Naumann, the young German artist in *Middlemarch*, was not inaccurate, though facetious, in assuring Will Ladislaw that through him, as through a particular hook or claw, the universe was straining towards a certain picture yet to be painted; for every present phenomenon, whether trivial or important, occurs here and now, rather than elsewhere and at some other time, by virtue of the whole universal past. All the forces of nature have conspired to place where it is the smallest grain of sand on the seashore, just as much as their interplay has strewed the æther-floated constellations of illimitable space. The slightest interference with natural sequence implies a disruption of the whole economy of things. Who suspends one law of nature suspends them all. The pious supplicator for just a little rain in time of drought really asks for a worldwide revolution in meteorology. And the dullest intellects, even of the clerical order, are beginning to see this. As a consequence, prayers for rain in fine weather, or for fine weather in time of rain, have fallen almost entirely into disuse; and the most orthodox can now enjoy that joke about the clerk who asked his rector what was the good of praying for rain with the wind in that quarter! Nay, more, so far has the belief in the efficacy of prayer died out, that misguided simpletons, who persist in conforming to apostolic injunction and practice, and in taking very explicit passages in the gospels to mean what the words express, are regarded as Peculiar People in the fullest sense of the term; and if through their primitive pathology children should die under their hands, they run a serious risk of imprisonment for manslaughter, notwithstanding that the book which has misled them is declared to be God's Word by the law of the land. Occasionally, indeed, old habits assert themselves, and the nation suffers a recrudescence of superstition. When the life of the Prince of Wales was threatened by a malignant fever, prayers for his recovery were publicly offered up, and the wildest religious excitement mingled with the most loyal anxiety. But the newspapers were largely responsible for this; they fanned the

excitement daily, until many people grew almost as feverish as the Prince himself, and "irreligious" persons who preserved their sanity intact smiled when they read in the most unblushingly mendacious of those papers exclamations of piety, and saintly allusions to the great national wave of prayer surging against the Throne of Grace. The Prince's life was spared, thanks to a good constitution and the highest medical skill, and a national thanksgiving was offered up in St. Paul's. Yet the doctors were not forgotten; the chief of them was made a knight, and the nation demanded a rectification of the drainage in the Prince's palace, probably thinking that although prayer had been found efficacious, there might be danger in tempting Providence a second time.

Soon after that interesting event Mr. Spurgeon modestly observed that the philosophers were noisy enough in peaceful times, but shrank into their holes like mice when imminent calamity threatened the nation; which may be true without derogation to the philosophers who, like wise men, do not bawl against popular madness, but reserve their admonitions until the heated multitude is calm and repentant. Professor Tyndall has invited the religious world to test the alleged efficacy of prayer by practical experiment, such as allotting a ward in some hospital to be specially prayed for, and inquiring whether more cures are recorded in it than elsewhere. But this invitation has not been and never will be accepted. Superstitions always dislike contact with science and fact; they prefer to float about in the vague of sentiment, where pursuit is hopeless, and no obstacles impede. If there is any efficacy in prayer, how can we account for the disastrous and repeated failure of righteous causes, and the triumph of bad? The thoughtful poor have sought appeasement of their terrible hunger, for some nobler life than is possible while poverty deadens every fine impulse, and frustrates every unselfish thought, but whenever did prayer bring them aid? The miserable have cried for comfort, sufferers for some mitigation of their pain, captives for deliverance, the oppressed for freedom, and those who have fought the great fight of good against ill, for some ray of hope to lighten despair; but what answer has been vouchsafed?

The dying words of Tennyson's Arthur—"More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of"—are a weak solace to those who recognize its futility, and find life too stern for optimistic dreams. Salvation, in this life at least, cometh not by prayer, but by valiant effort under the guidance of wisdom, and the inspiration of love. Knowledge alone is power. Ignorant of nature's laws, we are broken to pieces and ground to dust;



knowing them we win an empire of enduring civilization within her borders. Recognizing the universal reign of law, and the vanity of supplicating its reversal, and finding no special law in the statutes of the universe for man's behoof, Secularism dismisses as merely superstitious the idea of an arbitrary special providence, and affirms Science to be the only available Providence of man.

Thus theological conceptions obtruded upon the sphere of secular interests are one by one expelled. We now come to the last, and, as the majority of people think, the most serious and important—namely, the doctrine of a Future Life and of Future Reward and Punishment. Mr. Gladstone says that, putting this world and the next into two scales of value, the Secularist finds that the one weighs much, the other either nothing, or nothing that can be appreciated. This is very near the truth. Secularism, as such, neither affirms nor denies a future life; it simply professes no *knowledge* of such a state, no information respecting it which might serve as a guide in the affairs of this life. The first question to be asked concerning the alleged life beyond the grave is, Do we *know* aught about it? If there were indisputably a future life in store for us all, and that life immortal, and if we could obtain precise information of its actualities and requirements, then indeed the transcendence of eternal over temporal interests would impel us to live here with a view to the great Hereafter. But *have* we any knowledge of this future life? Mere conjectures will not suffice; they may be true, but more probably false, and we cannot sacrifice the certain to the uncertain, or forego the smallest present happiness for the sake of an imagined future compensation. Have we any *knowledge* of a life beyond the grave? The Secularist answers, decisively, No.

Whatever the progress of science or philosophy may hereafter reveal, at present we know nothing of personal immortality. The mystery of Death, if such there be, is yet unveiled, and inviolate still are the secrets of the grave. Science knows nothing of another life than this; when we are dead she sees but decomposing matter, and while we live she regards us but as the highest order of animal life, differentiated from other orders by clearly defined characteristics, but separated from them by no infinite impassable chasm. Neither can Philosophy enlighten us. She reveals to us the laws of what we call mind, but cannot acquaint us with any second entity called soul. Even if we accept Schopenhauer's theory of will, and regard man as a conscious manifestation of the one supreme force, we are no nearer to personal immortality; for, if our soul emerged at birth from the unconscious infinite, it will probably immerse therein

at death, just as a wave rises and flashes foam-crested in the sun, and plunges back into the ocean for ever. Indeed, the doctrine of man's natural immortality is so incapable of proof that many eminent Christians even are abandoning it in favour of the doctrine that everlasting life is a gift specially conferred by God upon the faithful elect. Their appeal is to Revelation, by which they mean the New Testament, all other scriptures being to them gross impositions. But can Revelation satisfy the critical modern spirits? When we interrogate her discord deafens us. Every religion—nay, every sect of religion—draws from Revelation its own peculiar answer, and accepts it as infallibly true, although widely at variance with others derived from the same source. These answers cannot all be true, and their very discord discredits each. The voice of God should give forth no such uncertain tidings. If He had indeed spoken, the universe would surely be convinced, and the same conviction fill every breast. Even, however, if Revelation proclaimed but one message concerning the future, and that message were similarly interpreted by all religions, we could not admit it as quite trustworthy, although we might regard it as a vague foreshadowing of truth. For Revelation, unless every genius be considered an instrument through which eternal music is conveyed, must ultimately rely on miracles, and these the modern spirit has derisively rejected. Thus, then, it appears that neither Science, Philosophy, nor Revelation, affords us any knowledge of a future life; yet, in order to guide our present life with a view to the future, such knowledge is indispensable. In the absence of it we must live in the light of the present, basing our conduct on Secular reason, and working for Secular ends. How far this is compatible with elevated morality and noble idealism we shall presently inquire and decide. Intellectually, Secularism is at one with the most advanced thought of our age, and no immutable dogmas preclude it from accepting and incorporating any new truth. Science being the only providence it recognizes, it is ever desirous to see and to welcome fresh developments thereof, assured that new knowledge must harmonize with the old, and deepen and broaden the civilization of our race.

In morals Secularism is utilitarian. In this world only two ethical methods are possible. Either we must take some supposed revelation of God's will as the measure of our duties, or we must determine our actions with a view to the general good. The former course may be very pious, but it is assuredly unphilosophical. As Feuerbach insists, to derive morality from God "is nothing more than to withdraw it from the test of reason, to institute it as indubitable, unassailable, sacred, without

rendering an account *why*." Stout old Chapman's protest against confounding the inherent nature of good is also memorable:—

"Should heaven turn hell  
For deeds well done, I would do ever well."

Secularism adopts the latter course. Were it necessary, a defence of utilitarian morality against theological abuse might here be made; but an ethical system which can boast so many noble and illustrious adherents may well be excused from vindicating its right to recognition and respect. Nevertheless, it may be observed that, however fervid are theoretical objections to utilitarianism, its criterion of morality is the only one admitted in practice. Our jurisprudence is not required to justify itself before any theological bar, nor to show its conformity with the maxims uttered by Jesus and his disciples; and he would be thought a strange legislator who should insist on testing the value of a Parliamentary Bill by appealing to the New Testament. Secularism holds that whatever actions conduce to the general good are right, and that whatever have an opposite tendency are wrong. Manifold objections are urged against this simple rule on the ground of its impracticability; but as all of them apply with equal force to every conceivable rule, they may be peremptorily dismissed. The imperfections of human nature must affect the practicability of any moral law, however conceived or expressed. Christians who wrote before Secularism had to be combated, never thought of maintaining that reason and experience are inefficient guides, although they did sometimes impugn the efficacy of natural motives to good. So thoughtful and cautious a preacher as Barrow, whom Mr. Arnold accounts the best moral divine of our English Church, says that "wisdom is, in effect, the genuine parent of all moral and political virtue, justice, and honesty." But some theologically-minded persons, whose appearance betrays no remarkable signs of asceticism, wax eloquent in reprobation of happiness as a sanction of morality at all. Duty, say they, is what all should strive after. Good; but the Secularist conceives it *his* duty to promote the general welfare. Happiness is not a degrading thing, but a source of elevation. We have all enjoyed the wonderful catechism of Pig-Philosophy in *Latter-day Pamphlets*. What a scathing satire on the wretched Jesuitism abounding within and without the churches, and bearing such malign and malodorous fruit! But it is not the necessary antithesis to the Religion of Sorrow. It is the mongrel makeshift of those "whose gospel is their maw," whose

swinishness makes them contemplate nature as a universal swine's-trough, with plenty of pig'swash for those who can thrust their fellows aside and get their paw in it. The Religion of Gladness is a different thing from this. Let us hear its great prophet Spinoza, one of the purest and noblest of modern minds : "Joy is the passage from a less to a greater perfection ; sorrow is the passage from a greater to a less perfection." No, suffering only tries, it does not nourish us ; it proves our capacity, but does not produce it. What, after all, is happiness ? It consists in the fullest healthy exercise of all our faculties, and is as various as they. Far from ignoble, it implies the highest normal development of our nature, the dream of Utopists from Plato downwards. And therefore, in affirming happiness to be the great purpose of social life, Secularism makes its moral law coincident with the law of man's progress towards attainable perfection.

Motives to righteousness Secularism finds in human nature. Since the evolution of morality has been traced by scientific thinkers, the idea of our moral sense having had a supernatural origin has vanished into the limbo of superstitions. Our social sympathies are a natural growth, and may be indefinitely developed in the future by the same means which have developed them in the past. Morality and theology are essentially distinct. The ground and guarantee of morality are independent of any theological belief. When we are in earnest about the right we need no incitement from above. Morality has its natural ground in experience and reason, in the common nature and common wants of mankind. Wherever sentient beings live together in a social state, simple or complex, laws of morality must arise, for they are simply the permanent conditions of social health ; and even if men entertained no belief in any supernatural power, they would still recognize and submit to the laws upon which society's welfare depends. "Even—" says Dr. Martineau—"though we came out of nothing, and returned to nothing, we should be subject to the claim of righteousness so long as we are what we are : morals have their own base and are second to nothing." Emerson, a religious transcendentalist, also admits that "truth, frankness, courage, love, humility, and all the virtues range themselves on the side of prudence, on the art of securing a present well-being." The love professed by piety to God is the same feeling, though differently directed, which prompts the commonest generousities and succours of daily life. All moral appeals must ultimately be made to our human sympathies. Theological appeals are essentially not moral, but immoral. The hope of heaven and the fear of hell are motives purely personal and selfish. Their tendency

is rather to make men worse than better. They may secure a grudging compliance with prescribed rules, but they must depress character instead of elevating it. They tend to concentrate a man's whole attention on himself, and thus to develop and intensify his selfish propensities. No man, as Dr. Martineau many years ago observed, can faithfully follow his highest moral conceptions who is continually casting side-glances at the prospects of his own soul. Secularism appeals to no lust after posthumous rewards or dread of posthumous terrors, but to that fraternal feeling which is the vital essence of all true religion, and has prompted heroic self-sacrifice in all ages and climes. It removes moral causation from the next world to this. It teaches that the harvest of our sowing will be reaped here, and to the last grain eaten, by ourselves or others. Every act of our lives affects the whole subsequent history of our race. Our mental and moral like our bodily lungs have their appropriate atmospheres, of which every thought, word, and act, becomes a constituent atom. Incessantly around us goes on the conflict of good and evil, which a word, a gesture, a look of ours changes. And we cannot tell how great may be the influence of the least of these, for in nature all things hang together, and the greatest effects may flow from causes seemingly slight and inconsiderable. When we thoroughly lay this to heart, and reflect that no contrition or remorse can undo the past or efface the slightest record from the everlasting Book of Fate, we shall be more strongly restrained from evil and impelled to good than we could be by supernatural promises or threats. The promises may be mistrusted, the threats nullified by a late repentance; but the natural issues of conduct are inevitable, and must be faced. Whatever the future may hold in store, Secularism bids us be true to ourselves and our opportunities now. It does not undertake to determine the vexed question of God's existence, which it leaves each to decide for himself according to what light he has; nor does it dogmatically deny the possibility of a future life. But it insists on utilizing to the highest the possibilities that lie before us, and realizing as far as may be by practical agencies that Earthly Paradise which would now be less remote if one tithe of the time, the energy, the ability, the enthusiasm, and the wealth devoted to making men fit candidates for another life had been devoted to making them fit citizens of this. If there be a future life this must be the best preparation for it; and if not, the consciousness of humane work achieved and duty done, will tint with rainbow and orient colours the mists of death more surely than expected glories from the vague and mystic land of dreams.

There are those who cannot believe in any effective morality, much less any devotion to disinterested aims, without the positive certainty of immortal life. Under a pretence of piety they cloak the most grovelling estimate of human nature, which, with all its faults, is infinitely better than their conception of it. Even their love and reverence of God would seem foolishness unless they were assured of living for ever. Withdraw posthumous hopes and fears, say they ; and "let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," would be the sanest philosophy. In his grave way Spinoza satirizes this "vulgar opinion" which enjoins a regulation of life according to the passions of those who have "persuaded themselves that the souls perish with the bodies, and that there is not a second life for *the miserable who have borne the crushing weight of piety*." "A conduct," he adds, "as absurd, in my opinion, as that of a man who should fill his body with poisons and deadly food for the fine reason that he had no hope to enjoy wholesome nourishment for all eternity ; or who, seeing that the soul is not eternal or immortal, should renounce his reason, and wish to become insane : things so preposterous that they are scarcely worth mention."

Others, again, deny that a philosophy which ignores the Infinite can have any grand ideal capable of lifting us above the petty tumults and sordid passions of life. But surely the idea of service to the great Humanity, whose past and future are to us practically infinite, is a conception vast enough for our finite minds. The instincts of Love, Reverence, and Service, may be fully exercised and satisfied by devotion to a purely human ideal, without resort to unverifiable dogmas and inscrutable mysteries. And Secularism, which bids us think and act so that the great Human Family may profit by our lives ; which exhorts us to labour for human progress and elevation here on earth, where effort may be effective and sacrifices must be real ; is more profoundly noble than any supernatural creed, and holds the promise of a wider and loftier beneficence.

Secularism is often said to be atheistic. It is, however, neither atheistic nor theistic. It ignores the problem of God's existence, which seems insoluble to finite intellects, and confines itself to the practical world of experience, without commending or forbidding speculation on matters that transcend it. Unquestionably many Secularists are Atheists, but others are Theists, and this shows the compatibility of Secularism, with either a positive or a negative attitude towards the hypothesis of a supreme universal intelligence. There is no atheistic declaration in the principles of any existing secular society, although all are unanimous in opposing theology—which is at best an

elaborate conjecture, and at the worst an elaborate and pernicious imposture.

Educated humanity has now arrived at the *positive* stage of culture. Imagination, it is true, will ever hold its legitimate province; but it is the kindling and not the guiding element in our nature. When exercising its proper influence it invests all things with "a light that never was on sea or land;" it transforms lust into love, it creates the ideal, it nurtures enthusiasm, it produces heroism, it suggests all the glories of art, and even lends wings to the intellect of the scientist. But when it is substituted for knowledge, when it aims at becoming the leader instead of the kindler, it becomes a Phaethon who drives to disaster and ruin. It is degrading, or at any rate perilous, to be the dupe of fancy, however beautiful or magnificent. Reason should always hold sovereign sway in our minds, and reason tells us that we live in a universe of cause and effect, where ends must be accomplished by means, and where man himself is largely fashioned by circumstances. Reason tells us that our faculties are limited, and that our knowledge is relative; it enjoins us to believe what is ascertained, to give assent to no proposition of whose truth we are not assured, and to walk in the light of facts. This may seem a humble philosophy, but it is sound, and not uncheerful, and it stands the wear and tear of life when prouder philosophies are often reduced to rags and tatters. Nor is it just to call this philosophy "negative." Every system, indeed, is negative to every other system which it in any wise contradicts; but in what other sense can a system be called negative which leaves men all science to study, all art to pursue and enjoy, and all humanity to love and serve? It declines to traffic in supernatural hopes and fears, but it preserves all the sacred things of civilization, and gives a deeper meaning to such words as husband and wife, father and mother, brother and sister, lover and friend.

Incidentally, however, Secularism has what some will always persist in regarding as negative. It finds noxious superstitions impeding its path, and must oppose them. It cannot ignore orthodoxy, although it would be glad to do so, for the dogmas and pretensions of the popular creed hinder its progress and thwart secular improvement at every step. Favoured, and privileged, and largely supported by the State, they usurp a fictitious dignity over less popular ideas. They thrust themselves into education, insist on teaching supernaturalism with the multiplication table, dose the scholars with Jewish mythology as though it were actual history, and assist their moral development with pictures of Daniel in the lions' den, and Jesus walking

on the sea. They employ vast wealth in preparing for another world which might be more profitably employed in bettering this. They prevent us from spending our Sunday rationally, refusing us any alternative but the church or the public-house. They deprive honest sceptics, as far as possible, of the common rights of citizenship. They retard a host of reforms, and still do their utmost to suppress or curtail freedom of thought and speech. While all this continues, Secularism must actively oppose the popular creed. Nor is it just on the part of the Christians to stigmatize this aggressive attitude. They forget that their faith was vigorously and persistently aggressive against Paganism. Secularism may surely imitate that example, although it neither intends nor desires to demolish the temples of Christianity, as the early Christians, headed by their bishops, destroyed the temples of Paganism, and desecrated its shrines.

Properly speaking, Secularism is doing a positive, not a negative, work in destroying superstition. Every error removed makes room for truth ; and if superstition is a kind of mental disease, he who expels it is a mental physician. His work is no more negative than the doctor's who combats a bodily malady, drives it out of the system, and leaves his patient in the full possession of health.

Secularism, like all new systems, appealing to the dissatisfied rather than the contented, its staunchest adherents are found among the *élite* of the working classes. Inquire closely into the *personnel* of advanced movements, and you will find Secularists there out of all proportion to their numerical strength. They are obliged to work in this individual manner, for the bigotry against Secularism is still so strong that few dare to recognize its organizations. They have always assisted the cause of National Education, and now it is carried they are getting their members on School Boards, and doing their utmost to improve the quality of the instruction given to children, as well as to preserve them from the nefarious influence of the priests. They promote Sunday freedom, they are advocates of international peace, they are sturdy friends of justice, they are firm supporters of the emancipation of women, they are lovers of mental and personal liberty, and they are actively on the side of every political and social reform. Where Christians *may* be they are *sure* to be ; not because they necessarily have better hearts than their orthodox neighbours, but because their principles impel them to fight for Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, irrespective of nationality, race, sex, or creed ; and prompt them to exclaim in the sublime language of Thomas Paine: "The world is my country, and to do good is my religion."



## THE ETHICAL MOVEMENT DEFINED.

BY DR. STANTON COIT.

THE aims and principles of the Ethical Movement are so very simple that anyone, although with no philosophical education, may both understand and sit in judgment upon them. I need not speak in parables, or use symbolic language; but there is need of explanation. People are so accustomed, when religion is spoken of, to look for mystical and transcendental ideas, which are remote from men's common every-day thoughts, that when the whole nature of the Ethical Movement has been explained, they still look for something further. Its very simplicity makes them fail to understand it, or, if they understand, they fail to appreciate it. "Is that all?" they are apt to exclaim. But we count it no defect in our Ethical Movement that it is thus simple and close to the working thoughts of every-day life. This simplicity is one reason for the hope that it will some day reorganize the spiritual life of civilized nations. Let me now set forth our main doctrines.

The first of these is, that the bond of religious union should be solely *devotion to the good* in the world. By "the good" is meant simply a certain quality of human character and conduct: the quality which we have in mind when we say that a judge is good because he is impartial; that a father is good because he looks out for the lasting welfare of his children; that a brother is good, because he causes his sister no pain if he can help it; that a citizen is good because he is willing to sacrifice personal gain to the prosperity of the whole people. The desire to spread more and more this quality of conduct and character, and to root out badness from human life is, we affirm, the true bond of religious union among men. Nothing could be clearer and more definite than this doctrine; we aim to preach it everywhere. We believe that by declaring devotion to the good in the world to be the bond, and the whole bond, of religious union we shall ultimately induce men to remove all other qualifications for membership in churches; and that, immediately, men who are now outside of all religious fellowship, or who chafe under the dogmatic restraint of the Church,

will form themselves into societies for the spread of goodness, and that such fellowships will be the means of thorough and permanent social reforms in politics, in education, and in family and industrial life. This idea of forming societies in devotion to good character and right conduct we believe stands equal in dignity and power with Christ's conception of a kingdom of God on earth, and that it comes to-day with all the freshness and vigour of a new social revelation, for which, however, the ages of Christian development have been preparing men's hearts and intellects. Not only is the idea clear and definite in itself, but when embodied in a society we have a social institution distinct from every other now existing. An Ethical Society, a fellowship solely in devotion to the good in the world, is wholly distinct from every Christian Church, whether Orthodox or Unitarian; for the Church, besides devotion to the spread of goodness in the world, demands allegiance to a personal Creator of the Universe. An Ethical Society, therefore, differs from every Christian Church in that its basis in the first place is clearer and simpler, is capable of being understood by the most ignorant man of ordinary intelligence, because all men know at least sufficiently well for practical judgment what goodness in human character is. But the idea of a personal Creator of the Universe has baffled the speculative efforts of the best disciplined and philosophic minds. In simplicity, therefore, an Ethical Society may claim precedence over any Christian Church, and from this it follows that an Ethical Society is in its very nature more suited to men of average intelligence and of busy life. But it also differs from Christian Churches in being broader in its fellowship. It excludes no one because of scepticism as to the existence and personality of God or the divinity of Christ. But, on the other hand, let it be distinctly known that we are not, as a society, Agnostic. We do not deny the possibility of knowing the existence of God. We do not request or exact that a man shall first give up his belief in a personal God and immortality before he shall become a member of our societies. We simply ask that he have a direct desire to plant good conduct and root out evil. As a society we are not pledged to any theory as to the origin of the Universe, or of conscience itself, nor to any theory as to the limits of human knowledge. We are not an Agnostic Society; we have no theory at all, as a society, concerning the limits of knowledge, therefore the charge which has been made against us that we are Agnostic is due to a misunderstanding.

When, on the other hand, it is brought as an objection against us that we have no theory which accounts for the moral enthusiasm which we possess and manifest, we point out the following distinction: as a society we have no such theory, but each

individual member may entertain whatever theory addresses itself to his reason as true. One may be a Theist, another a Materialist, another an Atheist. We simply maintain that no one shall make his theory a barrier between himself and his fellow-men. And yet let no one infer from our emphasis of goodness in human conduct that we set it up in the place of God as an object to worship. We recognize that goodness is purely an abstraction; that unless it exist in concrete acts and dispositions of the human will it has no reality or value for us. We make no fetish of it; it does not exist except as we are good; we cannot say, therefore, that in our view of life and the universe it takes the place which God or Christ holds in the Christian view, except simply that it is the bond of human fellowship and brotherhood. We demand that no one shall make the ideas of God and immortality the bond of religious union, that no one shall place any moral blame or stigma upon any other man for not holding them.

But although thus different from all Christian Churches, it does not follow that we approach any nearer to non-Christian religious fellowships which have recently sprung up, than we do to the Christian Churches. We are quite as distinct from Positivism, Secularism, and Socialism.

The Positivists set up the worship of Humanity, adoration of the great and good men of the past regarded as constituting an organic being, as the bond of religious fellowship. We do not condemn in itself the adoration of Humanity so long as it be not made the bond of fellowship; but when set up as the foundation of a new Church we count it as unjust and unwise. It is unjust to every man who cannot naturally cast his motives for doing good chiefly into a sense of gratitude for the good which he has received from humanity. Many a man has a feeling that although he had derived no good and perfect gifts from humanity, still that he should and would serve his fellowmen; in short, the love of mankind is in many a heart deeper than the conscious debt of gratitude. We are, furthermore, distinguished from Positivists in not exacting special recognition of Auguste Comte and his services. Nor do we, like the Positivists, recognize for a moment that the basis of religious fellowship is the sum total of all the positive sciences constituting the philosophic doctrine of the universe. We believe that science becomes an unjust dogma, the moment it is made the basis of a Church. The worship of Humanity and the doctrines of positive sciences are the Positivist bond, while ours is simply the furtherance of good character and right conduct.

Equally distinct are we also from the Secularists. The Secularists, as their very name implies, are reactionists against theology;

whereas we demand simply that theology be not made the condition of spiritual fellowship. Moreover, the Secularists, while affirming the dignity and worth of this world, and attempting to reconstruct society, do not lay down good character and right conduct as the starting-point of all social reform; in this we are more definite than they; they are in danger of incoherence—now setting up political power and now industrial revolution as the true means of making society happy and just; whereas we would start from the moral sentiment and recognize that mechanical changes in institutions and the execution of better laws must be supported by the moral consciousness of the community. Environment and law also affect character; but the impetus toward the doing away with evil conditions of life must arise in men who are bound together for the spread of goodness in the world.

We are also distinguished from the Socialists. I for one never met a sincere Socialist who did not, like ourselves, have the good of the world at heart; but, as the Church condemns anyone who does not believe in a personal God by excluding him from fellowship, so the Socialists, by the very fact that they name themselves Socialists, condemn all who do not believe in the transference of the ownership of land and capital from private citizens to the state. Whether the Socialistic policy is in itself right or not is not the question on which we can take issue with them. We simply say that their doctrine of reform should not be the basis of spiritual fellowship among men. An Ethical Society would include both Socialists and Individualists, permitting each group to work in its own way for the elevation of society; but would not allow either for the sake of his special remedy to break the bond of human brotherhood with those who differ from them. The Ethical Society Movement believes that it will draw to itself many men and women from all kinds of Christian Churches and from all non-Christian fellowships. It believes, further, that its influence will affect even those who remain in old fellowships until they will transform these into Ethical Societies; and if devotion to the good in the world be the right bond of religious fellowship it would be strange if this movement of ours did not tend to conciliate all conflicting groups of earnest men. Thus without swerving from the straight line of our conviction we feel sure that we shall draw all men into brotherhood. We are not a new Church, as Churchmen themselves define a Church; and we do not pretend to be; we have no desire to destroy the old Church, but to vivify it until it shall throw off all except the vital element of fellowship, devotion to the good in the world. Our first and main doctrine, then, is this which I have been stating. We would go about everywhere, but especially among the poor and the down-trodden,

urging men into this higher fellowship which we believe will prove the salvation of the world from misery and from moral evil.

Our second doctrine is that each man must bestow the highest reverence of his heart, the feeling of absolute sacredness and inviolability upon the doing of every individual duty as it presents itself to him. In fervour of devotion, in the sense of absolute and supreme worth and dignity, each duty is to be done; and, so far as the feeling of inviolability has been an element in religion, we affirm that the doing of duty is religion: with us every attack upon iniquity is a religious crusade. In this respect we are like the Salvation Army, which goes forth to fight sin. Every individual social reform which we take up becomes to us, in sacredness at least, a religious task. For us goodness must exist in human hearts and institutions; and to bring it into existence is the highest that we know. We preach that right conduct is of supreme importance, more important than doctrine, more important than ritual, aye, more important than the worship of God or Christ in the heart. We believe that right conduct is the way, and the only way, of a joyful, peaceful, inspiring, life. We believe that it is the way to attain a life of perfect selflessness, which has no anxiety about the future either before or after death, which is willing to become annihilated at death, if such is the lot in store for us. Devotion to right conduct is, we believe, the way, and the only way of freedom from the haunting presence of our own past transgressions. Complete devotion to the right is the only act of atonement by which we can become reconciled with our past selves. Thus conduct, because it is the way of life to the individual and of gladness to society, is of supreme importance; every other attempt at self-reconciliation or to attain joy and self-confidence is folly and evil. What food is to the hungry man, what water to the parched lips, what the sun in spring-time is to the trees and flowers, such is right conduct to the inner spiritual life of man. We preach this devotion to the good not only as the bond of fellowship, but as the way of inward peace and life.

Akin to this doctrine of the supreme importance of right conduct, is our affirmation that this human life of ours—even though we have no outlook toward an immortal existence—still contains adequate motive, more than sufficient incentive, to work and to suffer for mankind, and to carry out the severest injunctions of duty. We maintain that the grandeur of the motive to be upright and just is not diminished one whit by omitting the ideas of personal immortality, and of a personal God. There are persons who affirm that if these ideas be taken away, although morality would remain, nevertheless the motive to right action

would be deprived of its grandeur ; but in saying this they simply declare that for them the grandeur is gone, that in their experience they find themselves lacking motive. And as this statement is based on their personal experience, there is no wisdom in bringing against it logical arguments. We can only set over against it the testimony of our own moral experience—which is, that the motive for right conduct which remains, although we have no thought of God and immortality, is still so sublime—nay, so overpowering, that there is no room in human imagination to admit any additional incentive. If we fancy that there is, it is because we have not yet realized the significance of morality in reference to our individual and social life, however limited, here on earth. What we must do is to train our imagination until we are able to comprehend better the beauty and social significance of holiness. Our doctrine is, that the motive to right conduct, when its significance for our earthly life is fully appreciated, becomes practically infinite in grandeur, and that anyone who affirms the contrary is false to moral experience.

When anyone asks us, "Why should I do right?" as men sometimes do who think they need the hope of immortality to inspire them to duty, we may find it difficult to give an answer that will satisfy them ; as when a blind man asks us what we mean by the sun and the glory of his beams we cannot tell him ; and yet it is not because we do not know the sun and his light but because the man is blind. And when a man deaf from his birth asks us what we mean by music and what feelings it stirs in us, we cannot tell. There is such a thing as a defect of moral perception. The unworthiness, the perversion of the moral nature, implied in the question, "Why should I do right?" becomes evident if we make this question more specific and ask : "Why should I care for and watch over my child? Why should I refrain from beating my wife? Why should I not murder my brother? Why should I not delight in cruelty?" When anyone asks us such questions, it is becoming in us to pity and, perhaps, to condemn, but not to argue or reason. Men have asked us : "Why should a man suffer and sacrifice, even his life, if there be no hereafter for him? Why should Jesus go to the Cross if that was to be the end of Jesus?" It is easy to tell why Jesus *would* go to the Cross : he would because he loved his fellow-men, and saw that he could best serve them by dying for them. And it is also easy to tell to a man who loves his fellow-men why Jesus *should* go to the Cross : it is the same reason for which he did go. He ought or should go because it would serve his fellow-men. If anyone asks : "Why should I love my fellow-men?" we must say : "Stop! This is blasphemy against mankind, and we will not tolerate it

without a protest against such degrading scepticism." Love for mankind we see and feel in our own experience to be inviolable ; it is final. Love knows no ulterior motive beyond itself, and will permit no doubt as to the fact that it is its own justification.

And yet let no one imagine that we are mere visionaries and weak-minded idealists as to the moral worth of man. Although we emphasize and believe in a direct appeal to the moral sentiments in man, nevertheless we recognize that belief in a personal God, and the hope of immortality, have helped to keep men up to the line of duty ; and if we had nothing to fall back upon but the direct love of righteousness we should count our movement weak indeed. But we recognize that besides love for mankind and conscience there are many other motives to which we could appeal as supports to the moral life. These motives are lower ; but nevertheless are necessary, and serve the cause of goodness. Besides the inward moral sanction to right action, we would set before men the four other sanctions : first, we recognize that nine times out of ten among the uneducated classes of society wrongdoing is due to ignorance of the natural consequences of the wrong act upon the bodies and minds and fortunes of the doers. We would aim to remove this ignorance, thus bringing home to men's imagination the evils to which they unwillingly or thoughtlessly expose themselves. The natural consequences, which we call the natural sanction of conduct, thus furnish us with a powerful appeal to enlightened self-interest. But to the natural sanction may be added the legal sanction which attaches in society to the coarser forms of wrong-doing ; and to both these the social sanction, the praise and blame of one's neighbours, may come in as a powerful supplement. The love of approbation and the fear of disgrace may be made a thousandfold more effective than they are to-day. Besides this we can develop sympathy, and thus bring to our aid the desire to avoid the pain of seeing others suffer, and to gain the pleasure of seeing others happy.

But to teach these aids to character and conduct is only a part of our undertaking as an Ethical Movement. Preaching is not our chief means of furthering the spread of goodness throughout society. We shall also attempt, so far as lies in our power, to change the physical and social environment of men, so that it shall be more favourable to a truly human life. We expect the members of our society to do more for the community than the current morality of the day demands. We recognize that work for mankind of every wise sort is the most eloquent preaching. There is no way to convince people that one believes in brotherhood like proving oneself a brother.

## A NATIONAL CHURCH.

BY ARTHUR W. HUTTON, M.A.

THE subject on which I am to address you this afternoon may seem somewhat unconnected with that general series which has been carried on here during the past winter with so much success. I think, however, that I shall be able to show you that this is not really the case. If there is one impression more likely than any other to remain fixed in the minds of those who have attended any considerable number of these lectures, it is this: That religion is an immensely important thing; that national welfare, and indeed human civilization and progress, have been intimately associated with religion throughout the whole period of human history; that while particular religions have sprung into existence here or there, have grown to maturity, and then have slowly died out or have left but flickering embers to commemorate their past importance, the religious spirit itself seems to be immortal, and men seem always to need a field for the exercise of their religious emotions, as much as they always need food, and drink, and clothing.

Now all the lectures of this course hitherto delivered have dealt with religions of the past or religions of the present. Next Sunday week, Dr. Stanton Coit is to speak on what may fairly be termed the religion of the future. It is true that he does not claim for ethical culture the name of religion—he holds that the use of the word in that connection might prove misleading. But since the essence of all that is best in all religions, past or present, lies in their inculcation of duty, in their advocacy of the paramount importance of righteousness, of morality, of ethics—for all mean the same thing; I do not think we need trouble much about the word, one way or the other. And before I go further, it may serve to remove any possible misconceptions as to what I am driving at, when I proceed to state my views on the subject of a National Church, if I say at once that I profess myself to be a disciple of this religion of the future, a student in the school of ethical culture, a believer in the supreme law of righteousness; and if I do not add a disciple of Dr. Coit personally, it is partly because



I claim to have played the part of his John the Baptist here at South Place; for, more than four years ago (before I had the pleasure of hearing his name or of learning anything about the movement for ethical culture in America), in a lecture delivered in this hall one Sunday morning, on the moral training of children, I followed—crudely perhaps, but definitely—the same general lines that are now so ably enforced here, week after week.

My business, however, this afternoon, is not to speak on ethical culture, but on a National Church; and I shall place before you my grounds for holding that, in view of the transition, slow but inevitable, from the old to the new, an organization such as we in England possess in our National Church, is of immense value; and that instead of being destroyed—supposing its destruction to be possible—or, instead of being handed over to what would thenceforward be a narrow and powerful sect, it should remain a department of the State, and be popularized, liberalized, nationalized, so as to provide a home, as free as may be from pettiness and obscurantism, in which the national religious sentiment may develop naturally.

Starting, then, from the point of view that religion is the highest form of education, that its inculcation and its practice mean the training of the moral sense; and leaving out of sight for the moment the fact that popular religion invariably associates a great deal of superstition with this system of ethical training; we are pointed towards the conclusion that, on principles which may be described as socialistic, there is nothing inconsistent with justice in the abstract idea of an Established Church. On the contrary, if it be right that the community should combine for elementary education, and for technical education, it cannot be wrong that it should further combine for ethical education. And if it were possible to establish religion in this sense of promoting the highest intellectual and moral cultivation of the individual, whether youthful or mature, it would, I take it, be the duty everywhere of the State to establish religion. It is only because religion is so confused in men's minds with Ecclesiasticism and Clericalism that this common-sense view of the matter is neglected or forgotten. But the case we have before us is not an abstract one; and while I shall have to admit that some aspects of it render it less favourable to my contention, I hope to be able to point out that on various grounds the reasons for retaining an existing Establishment, such as we have in the Church of England, are weightier than the more abstract reasons by which a State maintenance of religion in general would be defended.

Now in order to clear the ground, I will first indicate certain

questions, partly political and partly ecclesiastical, with which I have nothing to do.

The Disestablishment, twenty years ago, of the Protestant Episcopal Church of Ireland has no bearing on the case before us. That was not a popular Church, but a garrison Church. It represented the English conquest of Ireland, and very little else. In my sense of the term it was not a State Church, for it was a foreign State Church; and on the principle of popular supremacy it was bound in justice to be deprived of its ascendancy. None of us regret its Disestablishment; some of us, however, do regret the far too partial Disendowment to which it was subjected. Those funds, of which it had the administration as an Established Church, were national funds, bequeathed originally by pious Irishmen in olden times for the maintenance of the Catholic religion, and diverted from their original intention at the time of the Reformation. You may say they should have been restored to the existing Roman Catholic Church in Ireland; and at the first hearing this sounds most plausible. But on reflection we see the justice of the contention that the national welfare is to be preferred to all else; and since no living Catholic in Ireland could be said to be wronged by not having these funds transferred back to his Church after three centuries of misappropriation, we are allowed to conclude that what was originally intended for the benefit of the nation, and especially of the poor, is best devoted to the service of the whole nation, in such matters as education, which concern its social welfare, and that apart from the narrowing guidance of conflicting Churches. I do not say that Ireland ought not to have an Established Church—that would be in conflict with the general principle I am advocating; but an Established Church in my view should be the popular Church; and in Ireland, as things are now, that would be the Catholic Church; and on its own principles the Catholic Church could not associate itself with the State and submit to popular government on those terms which alone are in my judgment admissible—viz. the acknowledgment of the supremacy of the State: of the Irish State that is, of course, in the present case, as representing the Irish people. But in any case, so large a share of these endowments ought not to have been wasted, as they were, in pensioning off worthless clergymen, who never had any duties worthy the name to perform; and who, as soon as they were sure of their money, retired to idle away the remainder of their aimless lives at various fashionable watering-places.

Then, again, as to the case of Scotland. Here, it appears, a majority of the people are in favour of Disestablishment; and if they continue to be of that mind, of course Disestablishment must

come. The case differs considerably from that of Ireland ; but it is equally a theological prejudice which makes a liberal Establishment of the kind I have in view impossible in Scotland at the present time. Two-thirds of the population of Scotland are convinced that an alliance between Church and State is prohibited by the words of Christ, when He said " My kingdom is not of this world." Of course with such transcendental reasoning as this you and I have nothing to do. Our religious kingdom belongs to this world, and to no other ; it is the reign of righteousness on earth that we seek to establish. Such it would seem was also the aim of Christ ; but if two-thirds of the Scottish nation, sincerely holding Him as their Master, are of opinion that He condemns Established Churches, but looks with favour on the United Presbyterians and the Free Kirk, they must on liberal principles have their own way ; and certainly if Disestablishment brings about, as some think it will, the fusion of the three Scotch Kirks, which do not differ from each other on theological grounds, none of us will regret that it has been accomplished.

The case of Wales must also, I think, be dissociated from that of England, on account of the intense unpopularity of the Anglican Church there. It is a striking example of the folly of attempting to maintain a State Church on any other than a popular basis ; and Prime Ministers in their appointments of unsuitable bishops have been as much to blame as bishops in their appointments of unsuitable clergymen ; and both are responsible for the existing state of things. Now that Disestablishment in Wales has found a place on the political programme, it must, I suppose, sooner or later come ; but after it has come, and when the term " liberal " has come to mean in Wales more what it means with us in London, I think it will be seen that the local population has suffered by surrendering buildings, that were really national property, to an ecclesiastical sect, together with a portion of national endowments—the remainder having passed to the central government, and so ceasing to be under local control. That at least is what is meant by Disestablishment and Disendowment as now proposed.

In the case of England, however, it is less clear which way the popular will inclines ; and while that is so, it is the duty of everyone who thinks he sees a more excellent way than that usually advocated, to point out what he believes to be the dangers of the one scheme and what the advantages of the other. Now the great mass of Englishmen who are not members of the Established Church, in the sense that they do not believe the doctrines contained in its Creeds and Articles, and do not attend its services—that is to say, about five-sixths of the adult population—are rather indifferent to the Church than hostile to it. I cannot deny that

there are various reasons which might fairly make the Church unpopular. Its clergy are mostly out of sympathy with liberal movements. They are in many cases in receipt of incomes altogether excessive in proportion to the amount of work they do. They do not hold that honourable position in regard to learning and intelligence which the clergy in other countries and at other times have done. Occasionally we hear of grave scandals in the ecclesiastical world, and the ridiculous complexity of the existing ecclesiastical law renders the adequate punishment of the offender difficult, if not impossible. Still, when all has been said, I do not think that the clergy of the Church of England are on the whole unpopular. In the towns especially you will often find earnest, hard-working men—such as Mr. Barnett, of St. Jude's, Whitechapel—who in no patronizing or pharisaical spirit have really the interests of the people at heart; and, what is to my purpose this afternoon, this spirit seems now to be the growing one, while many of the old ecclesiastical pretensions are silently being laid aside. I will give you an illustration of what I mean: A few months ago I was invited to attend a lecture to the London clergy, given at Sion College by Mr. Henry George, and I went. Now you know what kind of a lecture Mr. George would give, so I need not describe that. But the striking thing was the sympathy and enthusiasm which his lecture evoked. It is true there was one old clergyman who listened sadly for a short time, and then, shaking his head, gathered together his umbrella and great coat, and walked out. But there were over a hundred present, and the great mass of them cheered Mr. George over and over again. A few years ago this would have been quite impossible; and what is the reflection that it suggests? Why, that if the Church, in spite of the iron bars and gates and bolts with which it has been fenced about, thus shows signs of becoming liberalized from within, it is no small encouragement to those of us who would seek to accelerate that liberalizing process from without. And now, without further preface, I will give you a sketch of what I think the main features of that process should be.

On the one hand it would be a process of freeing the Church from theological and ritual bonds, a matter which would simply be accomplished by the repeal of the Act of Uniformity. I suppose it is not popularly known that the authority which the Prayer Book possesses in the Church is in virtue of its being the schedule to an Act of Parliament passed nearly two hundred and thirty years ago by the royalist lords and country gentlemen who brought about the restoration of King Charles II. I will not deny these men their merits in their own time; but it is obvious that

a body of reactionaries, such as they were, have nothing whatever in common with the progressive religious spirit of the nineteenth century; and yet it is solely in virtue of an enactment approved by them that the Church has become the exclusive body that it is. It was their doing, for example, that none but episcopally ordained clergymen can hold office in the Church. I do not suppose that the full liberty which this simple repeal would secure would at once be realized in practice; nor, indeed, do I think it desirable that it should be. It is right that the system in possession, which long use has endeared to thousands of devout and susceptible people, should be tenderly dealt with. It is only gradually, therefore, that the old order would change, giving place to new—the new being ultimately that a rational religious service (if service it be rightly called), such as that held here on Sunday mornings, or something better in the same line, could be held (say) in St. Paul's Cathedral, followed by a sermon (if sermon it be rightly called), in which human effort would be invoked to bring about some amelioration in the intellectual, social, or moral condition of those who most stand in need of such aid. In a word, the resources of the Established Church would be devoted to the service of humanity. I say that the mere repeal of Charles II.'s Act of Uniformity would open the way for this desirable consummation—desirable, that is, from the point of view of liberal religious thinkers—but it would not by itself accomplish it. The repeal would free the Church from the cold grasp of the seventeenth century, but the warm touch of the living nineteenth century would be required to bring it abreast of the modern world. How is this to be accomplished? Simply by bringing it under popular control. In theory it is so already; but the control is so very indirect that it is hardly perceptible in its effects—indeed it must, of necessity, be ineffectual as long as the Act of Uniformity is retained, which is absolutely prohibitory of any liberal growth or movement. Still, in theory, the Church is at this moment under popular control; for it is subject to the Royal Supremacy, which is exercised through the Ministry, which comes into power by the presence of a majority in the House of Commons, which is elected by the people. The Queen nominally appoints the Archbishops and Bishops and other ecclesiastical dignitaries, who in their turn appoint to most other clerical offices; but the Prime Minister really makes the appointments; and he is what he is in virtue of the popular voice; so that the Church is really at this moment under popular control, though the fact is but little appreciated, the popular action being so very indirect. It is important, however, to keep the fact in mind, for two reasons. First, when this

control is made, as I hope it will be, more direct and efficient, it will be a reply to such of the clergy as will wish to repudiate their responsibility to the people, asserting that the Church was independent before, whereas it is now strictly subject to the State. And secondly, it is well that our friends who desire Disestablishment should see how their scheme would hand over to an independent ecclesiastical corporation rights of considerable national importance which at present belong to the people.

You will say that the people do not value these rights; know nothing whatever, in fact, about them; and that they may just as well be alienated and handed over to those who would value them, and would exercise them with a due sense of responsibility. I cannot at all accept that view of the matter, though I admit that the people know little, and so care little, about the whole concern. They would care more if they knew more, and realized what interests for themselves and for their children are at stake. This increased interest and knowledge would undoubtedly follow if the popular control became more direct, if it were associated (as I think it should be) with the new system of Local Government. That system is itself as yet only in its infancy; but it has made a good beginning, and doubtless ere long we shall see District Councils as well as County Councils working under the general direction of the Local Government Board, and controlling, among other things, the local administration of education and of the police. It would all be on the same lines if to these same councils were entrusted the local administration of Church affairs. The alternative to Disestablishment which I am advocating would become, in its main features, an accomplished fact, if Parliament entrusted Church patronage and the control of Church property to these representative bodies. That is my main principle—that, together with the repeal of the Act of Uniformity; and now to make my meaning clearer, I must go a little more into detail.

But first I should like to say a word as to what I believe would be the probable results of Disestablishment, so that we may see some of the dangers that we seek to avoid. What would happen if Parliament should disestablish and disendow the Church? Now all schemes hitherto proposed have gone on the principle that the ecclesiastical buildings, the churches and parsonage houses, shall be handed over to the Church, and that vested rights shall be scrupulously respected. Accordingly, as each bishop or incumbent dies, the Act would come into operation in respect of the income of his successor; but his church and house would have become the property of the Church body. What then would be the immediate and visible result of Disestablishment? Nothing, so far as I can

see, but the exclusion of the Bishops from the House of Lords. Now this exclusion some years back used to be regarded as a most desirable consummation. People imagined all kinds of good consequences if it could only be brought about. But who shares those anticipations now? Many of us think it would be well to be rid of a second chamber altogether; others hold that a second elective chamber would be good for the country. But the Bishops are at any rate among the most respectable members of the Upper House; they enter there by merit, and not by the mere fact of birth; and if their appointment were more directly popular than it is at present I imagine that few men would be better fitted for a place in an Upper Chamber, assuming that the country decides to keep an Upper Chamber at all.

But let us look a little further into this matter of vested rights. A young man of thirdrate ability, but with good family connections, gets through the easy preliminaries to ordination, and at the age of twenty-five is given, we will suppose, a rich family living in the country, a year before the Disestablishment Act is passed. For forty or fifty years he may occupy that position with complete independence, although both in character and in teaching he may be altogether objectionable to the people over whom he is placed. I would ask whether his parishioners have no vested rights or interests as well as he? Whether they have not already too long been deprived of the administration of the funds which supply his handsome income? whether they might not claim some part in the management of the church and churchyard—the ornament, perhaps, of the neighbourhood—which will remain this young man's freehold for life. To ask these questions is to answer them; but I have not stated the whole case yet. The advocates of Disestablishment admit that Westminster Abbey, and perhaps the cathedrals, or some of them, must be retained as national monuments, and must not be handed over to the Disestablished Church; but they forget that in some ten or fifteen thousand parishes the old parish church is the only national monument that exists; and that though the villagers may set but little value on their church now, that would not be the case when they find they have a hand in its management, and when improved education shows them its true beauty and use. Let these buildings be handed over to the Disestablished Church, or, more accurately, to the newly-founded episcopal sect, and they cease to be the people's property thenceforth; they will become, presumably, strongholds planted everywhere in the country for the dissemination of a sacerdotal theology which the educated intelligence of the nation has entirely outgrown.

And what benefit will the people receive from the accumulation of funds in the hands of a central government—a process which

will begin so soon as the Disestablishment Act has been passed? It is very doubtful whether they will receive any benefit at all. A good deal will depend on the temper of the times. Should there be a war panic about, very likely the whole sum that Disestablishment is expected ultimately to realize will be squandered on fortifications or on an increase of the navy. Perhaps something might be voted for education—that is for elementary education; but we should remember that this is already provided for by law; while that higher education, which I take religion to be, has no provision for its maintenance on a liberal platform, and so becomes the property of sects, who, in the struggle for existence continually narrow its field.

We can, I think, make a tolerable forecast of what the spiritual character of the Disestablished Church would become. It is already accused of a tendency to sacerdotalism, and justly too, so far as I can see; but we must remember that sacerdotalism tempered by State control is less dangerous than it would be without it. A State Church is, on the whole, more liberal than what is called a voluntary one. It was the Free Kirk of Scotland which deprived Professor Robertson Smith of his post at the University on account of heresy; while the Established Kirk retained Principal Tulloch, who was a heretic no less. To give another example: Two Canons of the Church of England have lectured here on Sunday afternoons without rebuke from their ecclesiastical superiors, while the President of the Baptist Union was censured by *The Baptist* for doing the same thing. And it is a necessity of the times that this distinction should become more pronounced. Modern criticism tends more and more to leave no tangible authority but that of the State; and ecclesiastical bodies not connected with the State are more and more driven into those transcendental regions where the eye of faith alone can find a basis for the authority of the Church. This authority must at all hazards be established by them, else they cease to have any *raison d'être*; and hence the growth of sacerdotal and obscurantist doctrines. Starting therefore, as it would, with a majority of High Church Bishops—for, unfortunately, both Lord Salisbury and the only possible alternative, Mr. Gladstone, are High Churchmen—the Church of England when disestablished would certainly develop its hierarchical pretensions as its ground for claiming authority; and since bold assertions always gain disciples, it is by no means improbable that the Church might become a formidable rival of the State, and that we might suffer here in England, as Italy, France, Germany, and Belgium are suffering, from that detestable conflict between Clericalism and Liberalism—a conflict whose peculiar bitterness is that it frequently divides husband



and wife, and makes a man's foes to be those of his own household. It may be urged that the proposed nationalization of the Church would not avert this evil, since the process would be so very unacceptable to the High Church clergy that they would secede and form an independent body outside the National Church. Now, of course, it must be clearly understood that the rights of conscience are sacred on liberal principles, and that there must be no coercion in this matter either physical or spiritual. I take for granted that a variety of minor sects, as well as the Roman Catholic Church, will for a time, or perhaps permanently, refuse to associate themselves with the National Establishment of religion. Their exclusion will, however, be their own doing; for, of course, the ideal we have before us is that of inclusion as far as possible; and I do not doubt but that the more liberal-minded among the Dissenting congregations—the Unitarians, for example, and many of the Independents—will at once claim to be admitted, and will promptly be welcomed within the National Church. Still, sects with peculiar theological views, and most of all such as have ideas about the special sacredness of their own little Bethel, will decline to be incorporated, and we must not dream of interfering with their liberty. Sooner or later they will die out, while the mere semblance of persecution would only serve to prolong their existence. And to these sects already existing it is quite possible that a secession of some of the High Church clergy might add a new one; but I do not believe it would be a big affair. There would really be no occasion for it; for the changes I am advocating would not alter fundamentally the constitution of the Established Church, though they would doubtless alter its character and give it freedom. Already it is the creation of the State, and subject to the will of an elected Parliament; already it contains within itself men of the most divergent theological views; the only change would be that these differences would hereafter exist with the most perfect honesty, while now men inside the Church have to strain the interpretation of the Articles and Formularies to which they are legally bound, so as to silence the protests of their own consciences. And I believe the great mass of the clergy would recognize this when the nationalization I have in view has become an accomplished fact; though before its accomplishment they would move heaven and earth to prevent it, and would declare that they would never, never accept any such subjection of the Church to direct popular control. I have myself watched the course of similar ecclesiastical controversies for more than twenty years, and others could testify that the same thing has continued for a very much longer period. It was in 1865 that I was first shown how intolerable was the position of the Church of England,

in that her final Court of Appeal was a secular one—the Queen in Council; and I was assured that in no long time, unless the grievance were removed, there would be an exodus from the Established Church compared with which the Disruption of the Scottish Kirk would seem insignificant. But what has happened? The grievance has not been removed, it is there to-day precisely as it was in 1865 and previously; a handful of consistent men, but a mere handful, have gone over to the Roman Catholic Church, which acknowledges no Royal Supremacy; but the vast majority have remained where they were, sending from time to time strongly-worded letters to the Church newspapers, still threatening us with the disaster of their secession, which I, for one, do not believe will ever become an accomplished fact. Some of the men with whom I used to talk on these subjects in former years are now bishops, deans, canons, or, at any rate, beneficed clergymen; and it takes a good deal to make such men move: they seem well content with the safety-valve of the so-called Religious Press. And the same thing would doubtless occur again. A great deal of strong language would be used, with the trifling result of a few secessions; while the bulk of the clergy would soon accommodate themselves to the new order of things; and many of them, to do them justice, would be intensely relieved by their emancipation from theological tests, and would find an immense accession of moral strength and influence in thus being brought into contact with the people among whom they live. Indeed, as I said a few moments ago, although an Act of Parliament could at once entrust the control of Church patronage and ecclesiastical endowments to the local Council, it is not likely that the new authority would exercise its powers in any offensive or tyrannical manner. If, for example, you ask me what I think would be the immediate result if the London County Council were entrusted with the appointment of the next Bishop of London, I should say they would choose Mr. Barnett, of Whitechapel; that is to say, while the repeal of the Act of Uniformity would leave them absolutely unfettered in their choice, so that anyone—clergyman or layman, of whatever theological views—might be appointed, they would feel bound to select a man having the technical qualifications which the majority of those interested would regard as indispensable, while they would be careful to find one whose religion it is to serve the people's cause.

Perhaps I have put it rather too broadly in saying that their choice would be "absolutely unfettered." I mean only that the existing restrictions, which require the formalities of an episcopal ordination or consecration, together with subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles, and a promise to use no services but

those of the Prayer Book in public worship—all these would have been removed; but certain qualifications would, of course, be necessary—moral and intellectual qualifications; and these should, I think, be insisted upon far more seriously than they are at present. What is especially required in the liberal clergyman of the future is what we call “character;” and it is just this which the present method of selection leaves out of account, if it does not go far to exclude it. The superstition which represents the ceremony of Ordination as having an effect in moralizing or spiritualizing a man is partly responsible for this. Bishops are content to accept men intellectually and morally weak, believing that Ordination will somehow set matters right. Anyone who is at all familiar with the life of our Universities in recent years knows how few comparatively of the “strong” men now become candidates for Ordination. They may have the best qualifications for discharging the best kind of clerical duties; but, unless they have some transcendental theory as to the authoritative basis of theological systems, they cannot accommodate their consciences to the required declarations of assent and consent to all that the Bible and Prayer Book contain. And so they turn their thoughts in quite other directions; and the great and pressing work of moral education, of ethical culture, gets no help from them. But who are the men who find little or no difficulty in getting ordained, and in so becoming qualified for office in the National Church? Until recently it was a pre-requisite, very seldom dispensed with, that they should have taken a University Degree. That, of course, is not difficult when it is merely a pass without honours. But very little else is wanted. A certificate of having attended a course of twelve lectures; an easy examination in what is called theology, involving only a superficial acquaintance with a few books of no scientific, and of third-rate literary, value; a testimonial as to character from three clergymen, who need know but very little about the man—and that is all; while of these few and easy conditions, the most important one, the University Degree, is now dispensed with as frequently as it is demanded, because the obsolescence of the required theology makes it necessary that the bishops should put up with the lack of academical training. They would not get half as many men as they want if they insisted on it. Popular control would here, I am confident, bring about a much needed reform. It would insist on intellectual ability and cultivation; it would not require a declaration of assent to theological dogmas; it would demand men of tried moral strength, it would not rely upon an antique ceremony to provide them with spiritual power and character.

I do not say that the change would come at once. It is a

necessity of the case that it should be gradual. But sooner or later we should have a national clergy, abreast of the intellectual and moral progress of the times, no longer a separate caste, wearing a peculiar dress, as if they claimed to be a different species from the rest of their fellow men, but owing their claim to spiritual leadership to their superior culture, enlightenment, character; and I do not believe the time will ever come when there will be no need of such men. The National Church, when it has passed through the process of this new reformation, might be described as a great society for the extension of University teaching, only it would be considerably more than that phrase at present implies. For not only would its clergy be the authorized agents for conveying the best knowledge of the times in literature, science, and art, into all parts of the country; but they would similarly be commissioned to deal with ethical and spiritual questions—a field which is as yet untouched, as near as may be, by any such society at present existing.

I am, of course, aware that a thousand practical difficulties may be urged as proving the scheme I am advocating to be hopeless and visionary, however admirable in its general idea. No doubt grave problems would arise, some of them hard to solve; but what great reform worthy the name has not been carried out in the face of great difficulties? Some of these problems have already been anticipated and considered in a little volume called *Church Reform*, one of the "Imperial Parliament Series," published by Messrs. Sonnenschein; and I hope that such of you as are interested in this question will read what is there contained—it is the work of several writers; for though I think some of the proposals are inadequate, I am in general sympathy with it, and I should be sorry for any of you to carry away the impression that what I am advocating is the mere creation of my brain. An increasing number of thoughtful men and women have, for some years past, been looking in this direction for the best solution of the Church Establishment question. We are all agreed that things cannot remain as they are; but it is not in liberation from State control, so much as in making that control a reality, that we think the true answer will be found. State control, as it exists, leaves the clergy independent of the people whom they serve; and so it has, during the last forty years, done more than anything else to foster the growth of what I must call sacerdotal arrogance—for the thing exists, though I do not like using what sounds like abusive language; but State control in the sense of popular control would soon change all that. The Church of England does not need a liberation which would really give freer play only to ecclesiastical despotism; it is the people who need liberation from that

But it does need freeing from dogmatic fetters forged in an age when modern historical criticism and modern ideas of toleration were yet unknown. And from personal knowledge I can affirm that from the Archbishop of Canterbury downwards there are hundreds and thousands of Churchmen who would be glad to have these fetters lightened, though I admit they are not yet prepared to abandon them altogether. Presumably, on the repeal of the Act of Uniformity, while prosecutions on account of unorthodoxy would become impossible, I take it that the various congregations, or parishes, would elect councils whose business it would be to see to the conduct of the Church services, in such a manner as is best suited to the peculiar circumstances of each place; and this would hinder any sudden and violent breach with the past, while it would leave the door open for progressive modifications. The question of the appointment or removal of clergymen presents greater difficulties; and perhaps it would be best to have no uniform method everywhere. In regard to the removal of unsuitable men, doubtless the opinion of the congregation ought to have the greatest weight; but it should be understood that this applies to moral and intellectual disqualifications, and not to a mere disapproval of a man's more liberal views. For it must be borne in mind that a congregation is not infrequently less enlightened than its minister—indeed, the whole idea of the Church as an educational institution implies that this is the normal case—and it would be intolerable if a well-read and conscientious clergyman should be deprived of his post because he tells his people, for example, the truth about the Bible; while we must not forget the case, far commoner than is supposed, especially among Dissenting communities, where the minister preaches down to the level of his flock, and affects an orthodoxy to which his intelligence does not assent, for fear of offending his deacons or other church officials. And the same considerations apply to the question of clerical appointments. Leave the appointments absolutely in the hands of the congregation, whose knowledge of the clerical world hardly extends beyond their own particular church, and you are in danger of encouraging that very narrowness which popular control ought to prevent. I confess that I am all against the direct election of a clergyman by the congregation; I think it bad for both sides. I should like to see the appointments in the hands of a body whose horizon is wider—say, a Committee of the local District or County Council, subject no doubt to a veto of the congregation affected with the grounds definitely stated in writing. But it is a difficult question, and I only throw out these ideas as suggestions. The fact, however, that the Church of England has on the whole been widened by the existence of a

considerable amount of lay patronage, even when placed in irresponsible hands, is in favour of my contention that the spiritual freedom of the Church would be best served in the future by a continuance of this method of lay patronage exercised by representative bodies. Of course it is hardly necessary to add that any form of Disestablishment would put an end to this kind of lay patronage. All appointments to posts in our cathedrals and parish churches would be made by the bishops or the clergy, or else by those little cliques of devout laymen who are often more clerical than the most reverend of the clergy themselves.

I have said perhaps enough to lay this subject before you for consideration; but now that I am concluding, I see how much more might be adduced to illustrate and enforce my argument. Take, for example, the contemptible condition of theological and Biblical criticism in England as compared with what we see in France, Germany, and even in Holland. Our endowments in aid of these studies are magnificent compared with those in the countries I have named; but the professorships can only be held, in virtue of Act of Parliament, by men in Priests' Orders who have solemnly sworn that they believe about the Bible and Prayer Book much the same that was believed by the divines of the seventeenth century; and if their studies should cause them to abandon this belief, they are bound in conscience (so it seems to me) to resign their posts. The result is that the Established Church has become a kind of endowed conspiracy to hush up all that more independent students in foreign countries have done to throw light on the dark places of theology.

Nor must we forget how this obscurantism of the Established Church affects the smaller voluntary Churches by its side. It sets the fashion, and they follow. The Unitarians themselves, in spite of their far more rational position, are hardly an exception to this rule in England, though in the United States they are less hampered by conservative traditions. But the Church of England's obscurantist influence extends even to America and the colonies, while a widening of its intellectual life at home would doubtless have a corresponding influence across the seas. In truth this National Establishment of Religion, which we have inherited from our fathers, is a great trust, not only in its power for good or for evil at home, but in the part that it is competent to play in the widening of the religious life of English-speaking people all over the world. I think that most of us do not sufficiently realize that, while this Church remains a State institution, we hold its future in our hands. We can, of course, in impatience at its obvious faults, refuse to recognize our responsibility; we can listlessly allow our responsibility to lapse into the hands of others

who will know the worth of what we are giving away. But I would ask you to remember the value of all existing organizations; to remember that the worst use we can make of an institution is to destroy it. It is a fine saying of Burke's: "Wisdom cannot create materials; her pride is in their use." Before many years are gone the people of England will be called upon seriously to consider whether they are able and willing to use, in the light of modern science and criticism, the materials for religious, spiritual, and ethical culture, which the piety of past centuries has created for them; or whether they prefer to let their inheritance pass into sectarian hands. If our consideration of this subject this afternoon has done anything to better the prospects of the former alternative, I do not think that you will complain that I have wasted your time.

## APPENDIX.

### CORRIGENDA AND ADDENDA

IN

"THE CHURCH CATHOLIC," p. 307; AND "THE MASS," p. 329.

#### THE CHURCH CATHOLIC.

Page 307, (in foot note) *for* "This address" *read* "This as well as the next address."

- „ 312, line 6, *for* "patent circumstance that" *read* "question how far the perils of the time and."
- „ 312, „ 26, *for* "historic" *read* "historical."
- „ 313, „ 15, *omit* comma *after* the word "Too."
- „ 316, „ 37, *for* "perfection" *read* "imperfection."
- „ 317, „ 44, *for* "so-called" *read* "what they call a."
- „ 318, „ 28 and 29, *for* "Lo" *read* "So."
- „ 318, „ 30, *for* "A heart" *read* "O heart."
- „ 319, „ 27, *omit* comma *after* the word "precisely."
- „ 320, „ 3, *for* "derivative" *read* "distinctive."

#### THE MASS.

- „ 330, „ 14, *after* "confusion" *delete* "in."
- „ 332, „ 36, *for* "εύχαριστήσας" *read* "ευχαριστήσας."
- „ 335, „ 16, *after* "This" *insert* "is."
- „ 335, „ 27, *for* "antitype" *read* "archetype."
- „ 336, „ 3-36, *for* "I alluded in my former address" *down* to "very strongly to the apostolic age" *substitute* the following :—

In my former address, when I could not foresee that I should be asked to deliver a special lecture on "The Mass," I referred to some part of the remarkable evidence for the "Isapostolic" character of the office as a whole, which is afforded by a comparison of the most ancient variants of the Liturgy among themselves, and by the concurrent testimony of the earliest writings, Christian or Pagan, which deal with the matter. Before I revert to that branch of the subject now, it will be well that I should try to state to you in a few words what the office of the Mass in fact contains.



The Liturgies, in spite of wide apparent variation, proceed upon a scheme which is common, speaking broadly, to them all ; and in describing that, I shall be describing with sufficient accuracy the Mass which is celebrated in every Catholic Church to-day. We may say that it consists, if we reduce the Liturgies to their simplest terms, of the actual Commemoration, called the "Canon of the Mass," preceded by a double introduction, of which the first part is known as the "Mass of the Catechumens," as distinguished from the "Mass of the Faithful." The central and essential rite was called the Canon because of its invariableness. It is in substance, and even in much of its diction, alike in all the varying Liturgies. The other sections, being far less important, were to some extent subject to the discretion of Bishops, and have undergone local variation and substitution, though even in them we find a wonderful conformity.

The Office of the Catechumens (called "Missa" because it ended in their dismissal) is a public service, not especially eucharistic in its character. It begins with the "Introit"—the Solemn Entrance of the officiating Bishop or Priest with his attendants, who chant an introductory Psalm. Then come certain very ancient hymns. In the West, they are that triple cry for mercy called the "Kyrie Eleison," and the "Gloria," or Hymn of the Nativity, first peculiar to Christmas Day (but so used before 139 A.D., as it is said), and then extended to ordinary Sundays. In the East, you have the equally ancient "Trisagion." Next come the public prayers—the "gathered-up" petitions of the Church—which were named "Collecta" in the West, and *Συνάγη* in the East, and have come to be variable with us according to the day. Then the Priest reads portions of the Scripture—an Epistle or Lesson symbolic of the Old Law, and the Gospel setting forth the New. Between these, as the procession carrying with joy the Sacred Book passed along the steps of the altar, a processional chant called a "Tract," "Sequence," or "Gradual," was sung, which is the origin of many of those great Latin hymns that all the ages have borrowed. After the Reading comes the Sermon, upon the close of which the Catechumens were dismissed (as St. Augustine expressly tells us), and the "Mass of the Faithful" began. That was, of course, the "*mysterium*" which the Romans of the third century jested at—the rite at which the "initiated" only might be present.

This secondary introduction has undergone more changes than any other part of the service. So far as we have gone, you can trace a distinct parallelism between the common Roman Mass or "Western Rite," and the Liturgies of the East. Every Church took leave to add and amplify and modify to some extent, yet we can see very clearly through the whole the outlines of an original common plan—developed, as we cannot doubt, from the simple use, whatever it was, which led up to the long sermon that Paul preached at Troas. Though the coincidences are obviously not accidental, there is in the scheme itself a simplicity which argues strongly for its antiquity. The Solemn Entrance, the Traditional Hymns, the Collects, the Reading from the Old Testament, the Procession of the Book and the

Reading of the Gospel, the Expository Sermon, and then the Dismissal of the Uninstructed,—what could be a more natural rite ?

In the following section there is still a correspondence, though the original scheme has, for reasons unknown, become obscured by frequent transpositions. It probably began with a second "Entrance" of the officiating clergy, bringing in the bread and wine, which they presented forthwith, in what we still call the "Offertory," at the altar. A survival of this solemnity may be seen in the full Roman ritual at the chanting of the Creed. This, the public profession of faith by the baptized Christians who remained, is a common use in all the Churches. As is well known, it was made more exact in its wording about 325 A.D., but it is understood that the simple "Apostles' Creed" was the original formula used in this place, and received its name from that fact. After the Offertory—which is now only a short extract from the Psalms—follows the preparation by the Priest of the vessels he is about to use in the Canon, which is closed by the public washing of his hands, at the psalm "Lavabo." How old even the bare ceremonial is may be gathered from the fact that this very rite is accurately described by Cyril of Jerusalem, and is explained by him, as by all of us to-day, as a symbol of the purity requisite for the performance of the act that is to follow. Then after certain variable prayers, which are similar to Collects, but from being said in a low voice are called "Secreta," we reach that which has always been known as the "Preface" of the Commemoration itself. There is, however, another observance I should first mention, though it comes much later in the Roman ritual. That is the "Kiss of Peace" which was anciently exchanged by all the faithful in token of reconciliation, before they should "offer their gift at the altar," as Cyril says. In his use it followed the Lavabo—in others it followed or preceded the Creed—in ours it is exchanged at the singing of the "Agnus Dei" between the attendants at the altar immediately before the Communion. In every variant, its presence attests the constancy of the liturgical tradition and links us not only with Cyril in 347, but with Justin who described it before 150, if not as Cyril himself believed, with the closing words of the First Epistle to the Corinthians.

More remarkable, however, is the formula which comprises the so-called "Preface," the Responses which introduce it, and the "Triumphal Hymn" into which it breaks at the close. This singular and most striking group is to be found in *all* the liturgical families, and in all at the same point, as the immediate prelude of the commemorative office, technically known as the "Anaphora." Justin refers to it; Cyril describes it in minute and earnest detail, and preserves for us the startling fact that the very words of the Responses, which you may hear chanted in this connection at any Catholic Mass, on any Sunday, were so chanted in Jerusalem between 300 and 350 A.D. "*Sursum corda*:"—"Lift up your hearts; We have lifted them up to the Lord; Let us give thanks to the Lord our God; It is meet and right." So runs the ancient interchange, and the Priest, taking the word from the people's answer, goes on: "It is truly meet and just, right and available

unto salvation that we should always give thanks to Thee." What follows—and here again the various Liturgies agree with one another and with Cyril—is a hymn of the Glory of God, which ends by making mention of the Angels and Archangels, Cherubim and Seraphim, and of the heavenly song they sing, wherein we humbly join—"Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord God and blessed is He who cometh in the name of the Lord"—cometh, in very deed, in that sacramental commemoration of His sacrifice, which is about to begin.

The Canon itself may be divided into three parts—the Great Intercession for the Living and the Dead, the Eucharistic Commemoration itself, and the Communion. The tenour of the important words is preserved with astonishing fidelity here, although even here there is a curious difference in the way in which the Intercession is combined with the Commemoration. This variance is, in fact, the distinguishing test by which the critical scholar can say to which of the great families a particular local use belongs. In the Alexandrine the great prayer is before the consecration; in others after it; in our own, partly before and partly after.

Of the central Commemoration itself—the Sacramental words—and the Elevation, there is little that I can here say, except that in *every* rite they testify, beyond cavil, to the doctrine of the Real Presence. It is but a simple recital of the facts of the Supper at which the Mass was instituted, and of the command then given; and as the Church has always believed, the mystery of the Divine Presence comes to pass, and the miracle Christ wrought is wrought again, when the solemn words are uttered. Therefore we bow down, and adore.

It is this act of the Mass which the Church from the first century onward has styled the "Sacrifice"—the repetition that is by the providential ordinance of the great offering once made upon the Cross. But there remains the Sacrament; and when, after the "Agnus Dei," a bell rings again, the Priest, having made his private preparation, receives that "Holy Communion," and with him any or all the people, if they will. With this the office is completed, except for the prayers of thanksgiving, and the final blessing. In our usage, however, there is read the introduction of St. John's Gospel, as a final theme of meditation. Other prayers, English or Latin, may be added at the end, or at the beginning, or before the sermon; but with these exceptions, the stated course of the ritual is followed by the officiating Priest, the people being free to use their own prayers, so long as they in spirit and intention "assist at" or follow the action.

In reverting, after this description, to the historical question, I need not refer further to the internal evidence afforded by the consensus of the early rites. The force of that line of argument will already be apparent; and any candid critic can easily follow it out. As to the external evidence to be drawn from the writers of the first four centuries (including Justin and Cyril), my proposition is that, differing as they do in race, character, and subject, no fair-minded reader can collate the numerous utterances which bear on the central office of the Christian Church as they knew it, without

admitting that it was in its essentials such a service as the Mass I have described.

It would be impossible, within any practicable limits, to marshal these testimonies. By way of illustration, however, I may be allowed to direct attention to one or two indications of detail—internal and external—which point very strongly to the Apostolic age.

(*Then proceed* :—) It is known that the liturgical texts were not committed to writing till the fourth century. St. Basil . . . (*as at foot of p. 336 and onwards*).

Page 337, line 25, *omit comma after* "not long after."

" 338, " 9, *for* "350" *read* "347-8 A.D."

" 338, " 29, *for* "wrote" *read* "is given as the author of."

" 338, " 31, *after* "probably" *add* "so far as they are genuine."

" 338, " 32, *for* "certain fragments of one of these which was lost"  
*read* "certain hitherto unknown fragments of an  
evidently genuine epistle."

" 339, " 43, *for* "religion of intellectual life" *read* "region of  
intellectual life."

" 343, " 12, *for* "our" *read* "any."

" 346, " 6, *for* "whenever" *read* "wherever."

" 346, " 25, *for* "Son of God" *read* "Love of God."